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NOTES,

PRACTICAL AND EXPOSITORY,

ON

THE GOSPELS:

FOR THE USE OF

BIBLE CLASSES, SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS, CATECHISTS,
AND OTHER PIOUS LAYMEN.

"Verbum Dei est Christus, Qui non solùm *sonis*, sed etiam *factis* loquitur hominibus."
St. Augustine.

BY

REV. CHARLES H. HALL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL I.

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INTRODUCTION

TO THE

NEW TESTAMENT.

The title of New Testament, by which the collection of writings now reverenced as the Christian Scriptures, is known, was given at an early period. It first occurs in a work of the learned Catechist of Alexandria, Origen, who lived in the third century. Since that period it has passed into general use. It is a title dear to us now for its ancient and universal use, and well adapted to express the real character of these sacred writings. Though not given by divine authority, it is justified by many passages of Scripture (Matt. xxvi. 28; Gal. iii. 17; Heb. viii. 8; ix. 15—20). St. Paul, in particular, terms the sacred Gospel containing the promises and pledges of salvation by the same words in Greek, though it is translated in his epistles by the corresponding name—*The New Covenant.* These writings contain the Gospel as it was finally delivered in writing by the inspired authors. It is a *Testament*, that is, a will and holy bequest, sealed by the blood of the Testator, left by Him to all believers who in filial love and faith seek to walk in His steps; bequeathing to them the blessed inheritance of the saints, a life of peace here, a title to a better country, "that is an heavenly," hereafter. It is a *Covenant*, ratified by the Redeemer of mankind, binding all that believe in Him to holy, constant obedience to His commands; binding Him to aid them in their pious designs, to reward them for their constancy. It is *New*, as opposed to that older covenant which opened the way for it, and then waxed old and vanished away, to make room for it: *new*, in that it never waxes old, never fails to raise in the generations of believers the same strong faith, the same immortal hope and love, that actuated its earliest followers. What words, then, can give to the Christian a better idea of this divine volume? While he calls the whole canon of Scripture, with pious fondness, *the Bible*, that is, the one Book, let

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him know that this holy portion of it bears comfort in its very title, of the New Testament of his dear and dying Lord.

The New Testament is a collection of inspired writings, which contain "all things necessary to salvation." It is divided into *four* great divisions. The Gospels—the Book of the Acts of the Apostles—the Epistles, and the volume of Revelation. There are twenty-seven treatises on various occasions and subjects, by eight different authors. The Gospels are independent narratives of the Life of Christ. The Acts relate the various wonderful events which attended the organization of the Church of Christ after the great Christian era of the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. The Epistles were written by St. Paul, St. James, St. Peter, St. John, and St. Jude, on such subjects of importance as occurred in the space of their busy and stormy lives, to guide the faith of the first believers, and to be the future infallible standard of doctrine to the whole Church. The Revelation is a prophecy, written in a troubled time, to animate the Christians by a view of the advance and final glory of the Gospel dispensation. All are written simply as if the writer had no other intention than such as appears upon the surface; to cheer this and that particular church or class of Christians. Yet all were *inspired* by the Holy Spirit, who guarded and guided the minds of the authors, so that, without error or defect, they have given to the holy Catholic Church of all ages a volume perfect in its kind, and adapted to all the wants of penitent and faithful men. The whole Christian world professes to yield to its authority, and to be guided in all things by its plain assertions. In other languages, amid other customs, climates, and far different races than those of its authors, it holds undisputed sway. The polished nations of Europe—the wild tribes of Asia—the colonies of Africa and the islanders of the Pacific, all reverence the words of the unlearned fishermen of Galilee, and the scholar of Gamaliel.

Learned authors have adduced many arguments to prove the truth and authenticity of these writings. It will be possible only to recapitulate the heads of a few of them here. They may be divided into two classes, those which regard the internal character of the volume, and those which regard the external history of it. Of the first class are the arguments drawn from the style of the writings, the descriptions of customs, countries, rites, and ceremonies, the allusions to contemporaneous history, the simplicity of the authors, being unlearned men, and unable to form a conspiracy to deceive the world, the elevation of sentiment, the sublime morality which is taught, embracing in brief sentences the supremest wisdom, the coincidences which are discovered by any candid reader—all these, and others like them, give the volume a living witness in the heart, and are, if we may so speak, its own voice uttered to the inner soul

of man, that its laws, morality, and promises are all in harmony with that secret conscience which God has given to be his chief guide. The arguments from the history of the volume are equally powerful, and convince the logical understanding; the long line of authors witnessing to the Scriptures, bishops and learned men in all countries citing texts from them with unhesitating credit, the heathen and hostile writers recognizing their existence; all confessing to the belief that such men as the Apostles did truly live, and taught these things, not only without profit, but at the cost of constant suffering, and finally of life itself, that they began the foundation of the Church, instituted the sacraments, the custom of preaching to men in order to turn them from their sins, the orders of the ministry to govern and feed the Christian flock; all these facts, in the language of Dr. Horne, give us "infinitely more satisfactory evidence than we have for the production of any classic authors, concerning whose genuineness and authenticity no doubt was ever entertained." The Christian may rejoice in the unhesitating faith which God has given to him to enjoy, by the Holy Spirit, showing him the inner wants of his spirit, while his faith receives so strong support from the history of the Church and Scripture.

The reader must desire to learn the history of the Scripture in his own tongue, in our ancestral land, dear England. She has long borne a brave part in the work of spreading the written word of God to all nations and tongues. When and how did she receive it? It is believed that the ancient Saxons had parts of the Scriptures in their own language. Some portions were translated by Adhelm, Bishop of Sherborne, Egbert, Bishop of Lindisferne, the venerable Bede, and King Alfred (A. D. 706–721). There were, however, very few copies of them ever made, as printing was unknown. Only the wealthier class could pay the great cost of manuscript copies. The fact, however, gives us a glimpse of that strong love of the Bible which was afterward to become a distinguishing mark of the Anglo-Saxon mind. The Abbot of Malmesbury translated into Saxon the books of the Pentateuch, Judges, and Job. A translation of the four Gospels has been printed at Oxford from an ancient Saxon manuscript, which is now in the Bodleian library. Richard Rolle, a hermit, translated the Psalms in 1349. Thus by these fragments, from time to time, the nation manifested its constant desire to read in its "own tongue the wonderful works of God."

But the history of the English Bible begins properly with that noble leader and herald of the coming Reformation, *John Wickliffe*. He translated the entire Bible about the year 1380. Being unacquainted with the original languages, Hebrew and Greek, he made his translation from the Latin Bibles which were then in use.

His work was very offensive to the Romish party of the nation, so that in 1390 a bill was introduced into parliament for the purpose of suppressing it. The king's brother, the Duke of Lancaster, spoke against the bill, manifesting the same strong *English* spirit of resistance to foreign authority which has always marked the national character, to this effect: "We will not be the dogs of all, seeing other nations have the law of God, which is the law of our faith, written in their own language; that he would maintain the having this law in our own tongue against these, whosoever they should be, who brought in this bill." The bill was rejected by his influence. This encouraged Wickliffe's followers to issue another edition more correctly translated. Afterward this translation was condemned by a convention held at Oxford by Archbishop Arundel, and persecutions ensued against the venders of it. The Bible of Wickliffe has never been printed; the New Testament was printed in A. D. 1731, in England.

In the reign of Henry VIII., *William Tyndal*, a favorer of the Reformed doctrines, was driven by the Romish party out of England. He travelled in Germany, where he made the acquaintance of Luther and other learned men, and finally settled at Antwerp. He translated the New Testament from the original Greek, and printed it with brief glosses or notes, without his name, about the year 1526. This was the first printed edition of any part of the English Scripture. It was sent over to England, and eagerly read by the common people. The enemies of the Reformation became alarmed, and sought to destroy the edition. Sir Thomas Moore, Lord Chancellor, and Bishop Tonstall of London, bought up all the copies which they could find, and burnt them at St. Paul's cross. Tyndal now associated with himself Miles Coverdale, and undertook the rendering of the Old Testament. He published the Pentateuch in 1530, with prefaces against the English bishops and clergy, and in 1531, the book of Jonah. Being seized and imprisoned by the Emperor, at the instance of Henry VIII. and his ministers, he was put to death at Villepont, near Brussels, 1536, in consequence of a decree made in an assembly at Augsburg. He was the victim not only of his desire to spread the Scriptures, but also of his bitter invectives against the English clergy, as may be gathered from the history of his death.

In 1535, one year before his death, Miles Coverdale, who had been associated with him, published a translation of the whole Bible at Zurich, and dedicated it to King Henry VIII. Much of it is supposed to have been due to Tyndal, though his name was not mentioned from reasons of policy. This was the *first* printed English Bible. Cranmer had been Archbishop of Canterbury two years, and used his influence to protect the readers of the English Scrip-

tures, and to increase their number. This he did in spite of great and often successful opposition. He projected an authorized translation. But by the refusal and opposition of Stokesby, Bishop of London, he failed to carry it through. In 1537–9, three editions of the Bible were printed by Coverdale, the last under the patronage of Cranmer. "It was wonderful," says Strype, "to see with what joy this book of God was received, not only among men learned, and those who were noted lovers of the Reformation, but generally all over England, among all the common people, and with what greediness God's word was read, and what resort there was to the places appointed for reading it. Every one that could, bought the book, and busily read it, or heard it read: and many elderly persons learned to read on purpose." This translation is now called Cranmer's Bible. The Psalter in the Prayer Book is taken from it. In 1557–60, the Geneva Bible was printed by refugees from the persecutions of Queen Mary. It is of a Calvinistic cast, and has mostly passed out of use.

But soon after the accession of Queen Elizabeth, a translation of the Bible was undertaken by royal authority under the direction of Archbishop Parker. Fifteen distinct parts were allotted to as many learned prelates and others. It was completed and printed in 1568, and is now generally called the Bishop's Bible, because eight of the persons concerned in it were of that rank.

The Romanists, when pressed by the influence of these efforts of the Protestants to promote the reading of God's word, were obliged to issue a translation of their own. Many reasons conspire to make it of no authority, and it is used only by themselves in order to keep out of the hands of their followers the more correct Protestant Bibles. Much like this pitiful grafting of Latinism into the pure stock of the honest English, is the effort of that corrupt Italian Church to defile and pervert by its corruptions the English and American character. May we see them defeated by God's favor, in all their wicked undertakings.

In a conference held at Hampton Court, 1603, before King James the First, it was complained that many errors and defects existed in the Bibles then in use, and the request was made of his Majesty that a new one should be made. Accordingly, the king set about it with great and honorable zeal. He ordered, by a special decree, that all the learned men of the kingdom should be sought out, settled in benefices with competent means, and employed in this work; that all who had skill in Hebrew and Greek, and had written or done any thing in elucidating the sacred text, should be sought for by the bishops, and enjoined by royal command to assist. It was truly a *national work*—one that reflects undying lustre on the king, and excites in us lively gratitude to the Giver of all good

gifts. After more than two centuries, we use it with reverence and love. Its words are linked to our earliest associations. It is the real bond and safeguard of *unity* among all who speak the English language. Some particular account of it will therefore be profitable.

Fifty-four of the most learned men in the Universities and other places were nominated to perform this work; but before it was begun, seven of them had died, or declined acting in it. The forty-seven who remained were divided into six divisions, and places assigned where they were to meet and consult together—Oxford, Cambridge and Westminster. The Bishop's Bible was to be made the general guide in their proceedings. Names were to be altered as little as possible. Words were to be chosen such as had received the consent of the Fathers and other best writers of divinity. No alteration was to be made of chapters or verses. No marginal references were to be admitted except such as were necessary to explain the text, and references to parallel places were to be set down in the margin. Each individual of a division was to take the same chapters and interpret them to the best of his ability. Then all of the divisions were to meet together and compare their works. After this, each book was to be written out and sent to all the other companies for their approbation. In disputed cases, they were subjected to a general committee, who were to consult the most learned men in the kingdom and obtain their opinions. The work was divided as follows :

1. To ten learned men at Westminster, as far as the first book of Chronicles inclusively.

2. To eight others at Cambridge, from the first of Chronicles, the remainder of the historical books, and the Hagiographa, namely Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Canticles, and Ecclesiastes.

3. To seven at Oxford, the four greater prophets, the Book of Lamentations, and the twelve lesser prophets.

4. To seven at Cambridge, the Apocrypha. Mr. Miles Smith, afterwards Doctor of Divinity and Bishop of Gloucester, was one of this division. He was the author of the *Preface* to the whole volume, and one of the general committee of revision.

5. To eight at Oxford, the four Gospels, the Acts, and Revelation.

6. To seven at Westminster, the remainder of the New Testament.

The work was begun in 1607, and finished after three years careful deliberation. Six persons, two from each place, then met at Stationers Hall, and read over the whole. The translation at length came out in 1611, the monument of the pious care of the learned men concerned in it. This is the Bible now in common use

among all classes. Its superior excellence is such as might be expected from the pains which were taken in its compilation. Says Dr. Gray: "It is a most wonderful and incomparable work, equally remarkable for the general fidelity of its construction and the magnificent simplicity of its language." Though the gift of tongues has long ceased in the holy Church, and men can no longer look to others for miraculous and infallible declarations on the various disputed points of theology, yet the English reader may thank God for the more useful gifts to his Church of industry and fidelity, by which the divine word is put into the hands of all, and things which are needful for the soul's health are set forth in plain and common language.

The division of the Bible into chapters and verses is of no very ancient date. About A. D. 1240, Hugo de Sancto Caro, commonly known as Cardinal Hugo, in making an index or concordance of the Latin Bible, found it necessary to divide it into chapters and sections. The latter were made by placing the letters of the alphabet at certain distances along the margin. The subdivisions into verses came from the Jews; for about A. D. 1430, Rabbi Nathan, an eminent Jew, published a concordance of the Hebrew Bible, adopted the system of chapters of Cardinal Hugo, and divided the chapters into verses by affixing letters. About a century later, Vatablus, a Frenchman, an eminent Hebrew scholar, published a Latin Bible, with chapters and verses marked by figures instead of letters. This example has been since followed in all languages by general consent. The present division of the New Testament into verses was made by Robt. Stephens, a printer of Paris, in an edition issued by him in A. D. 1551. Occasional defects are suggested in this division, but with no very good reason. It is well nigh as perfect as may be, and it is perhaps impossible to expect that it will ever be altered. The reader, however, may often with great profit read the books of Scripture without any reference to this human arrangement. He will discover new beauties in taking a single book as a whole, and often gain a glimpse into parts of the reasoning, by taking in all at once. It was in this way that most of the books of Scripture were written, and it is true of St. Paul's epistles especially, that the train of reasoning passes on as a *unity*, without the possibility of being limited to chapters. Particular editions are now published with a view to this kind of reading. Thus it has happened by little and little that we have the Bible in its present form. It is a gift of God to us; a gift, even if locked up in a dead language, and explained by learned men; a gift, even shut out from the poor as it once was by the enormous price of copies (once as high for a single copy of the New Testament alone

as one hundred and seventy-seven dollars), but a gift now free, and in reach of all, simple and learned, rich and poor alike. The English and American nations have at this day the proud boast—may they be humble, and rightly use the blessing—of having done more than other nations to make the word of God free to the whole world. On every cottage table may be found, if there be the will for it, the Scriptures. In scores of languages the English and American presses multiply the editions, and send them, on the wings of their immense commerce, to all people, nations, and languages, that all may serve God. Like the decree of Darius in intention, but sublimer in execution and love, the press now effects "that in every dominion men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel; 'that they love and rejoice before the God of the Christians:' for he is the living God, and steadfast for ever, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and His dominion shall be even unto the end;" Dan. vi. 26.

The reader will suffer a word of advice, in conclusion, as to the manner of reading the Holy Scriptures—especially the Gospels. And 1st. Bear in mind that these sacred books do verily and indeed "contain all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."—Article VI. of XXXIX. Articles. You are, therefore, to look hitherward for the way of safety. You come not for amusement, nor for human learning, for sport nor levity. The book is to you a sacred trust. It lays before you a path by which it is certain that you may be saved. The Church to which you belong says to you freely, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life." She assures you that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works;" 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. Examine carefully, anxiously, freely, all that it contains. See to it that you do not build upon the sand. The Lord Himself invites you. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool;" Isaiah i. 18. Be not afraid of the Scriptures, but learn them; *learn them* with a faithful heart, a clear mind, and a resolute will. They will convince you, invigorate your whole being, and give you a good hope through grace.

2d. Read them in a strong and filial gratitude to the Church which has preserved them so long for you, and opened the way for you to the understanding of their mysteries. (See the following

texts: Mat. xvi. 18; 1 Cor. xiv. 4, 5; Eph. i. 22; iii. 10; v. 25, 32; Col. i. 18, 24.)

It is an evil and wicked design that has been shown by some of late to set the Scripture and Church in array against each other. They are one; they must stand together. And in other countries where this opposition has been made, the loss of the one has insured the corruption and rejection of the other. Think who wrote the Christian Scripture. *Christian Bishops.* Some we term Apostles by honor, but they were Bishops. Who copied them—spread them? Who rescued them in the great councils from the spurious works of uninspired men? Who have guarded them in all ages? *Christian Bishops.* And are all deceived? Have all lent themselves to propagate a book which condemns them? Are they, or can they be in any sense hostile? No. Believe it not. You are to read the text. The Church alone can give you its *history*, that history which must often fix the true signification thereof. Who baptized you? Who gave you the first impressions of religious truth? Who have taught you how to think by creed, prayer, commandment, sermons and other things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health? The ministers, the mothers and fathers of *the Church.* Thus there is one object, one work between them. Suffer them not to be divided in your mind. As you read, do it with a conviction that the Holy Catholic Church has not feared to give you the word of God, but not to be read with the ungrateful desire to subject her love to your soul to the common questioning and skeptical harshness, which would horrify you in any analogous case. The doctrines of the Church, as they appear in the Prayer Book, are the true guide to you in the study of the Gospels. She claims to have "power to decree rites or ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith," yet "not to ordain any thing that is contrary to God's word written," nor to "so expound one place of Scripture that it be repugnant to another. Wherefore, although the Church be a witness and keeper of Holy Writ, yet as it ought not to decree any thing against the same, so besides the same ought it not to enforce any thing to be believed for necessity of salvation."—Article XX. Guarded by these limits, your love may flow safely forth to the Church of your fathers.

Lastly. Read the Scripture with a sense of the important fact of its *inspiration.* It is no common Book—but the One Book, in which the Holy Spirit of God has mingled its own infinite wisdom with human thoughts. In vain do men strive to reduce its words to all the shallower laws of human volumes. It is subject to them so far as it had human originals. But in the one great mystery of its *inspiration* it transcends them all. To discover

the meaning and mind of men—say of St. Matthew or St. Mark—of course you are bound to use all the human helps, and be subject to all the laws of interpretation which are usual with other books. But then you must not think to treat this sacred volume only thus. What in others is only careless, or unpremeditated, or defective, has here its uses and meanings. There may be an error in this matter. Men have forced meanings on the text which it does not bear. But it is a safer error. No mysticism has ever equalled in evil the abominations of rationalism. No spiritualizing of Origen or Chrysostom has ever approximated in defect to the horrible comments of Strauss or Paulus. Keep the talisman of good sense in your hands, but fear not to fall down and kneel low before the Inspiring Spirit, whose voice speaks to you in this Book, if so be you are humble, docile, and pious to hear it. Treading among the sacred things of God—near the Burning Bush of His presence, put off the poor dependencies of human wisdom and semi-skeptical reasonings from thy soul and listen to God, and not to man.

Blessed Lord, who hast caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of thy Holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO

ST. MATTHEW

INTRODUCTION.

St. Matthew, also called Levi, was a Son of Alphaeus (Mark ii. 14), not however of that one who was spoken of as the father of James and Joseph. He was a native of Galilee. He was, when we first hear of him, a publican or tax-gatherer, on the shores of the Sea of Tiberias, probably collecting toll from persons who passed over that sea. Our Saviour commanded him to follow Him, which he did cheerfully, Ch. ix. 9. He was soon after appointed as one of the twelve disciples who were to be the future Apostles of the Church. He made an entertainment for Jesus, at which were several publicans, Ch. ix. 10; Luke v. 29. After the ascension of our Lord there are no certain accounts of him. Until he wrote the Gospel he probably remained in Judea. After that, as ancient writers of the fifth century relate, he went into Ethiopia. If so, it is likely that he there suffered and died in his work.

There is a great difference of opinion among the learned, as to the date when this gospel was written. Some have placed it as early as 38 A. D., others as late as 64 A. D. The year 40 A. D. seems to satisfy many. It is too late in the world's history for us to expect to settle questions as obscure as this. And it is enough for all practical wants, for us to believe that the Gospel was written between these periods, and before the destruction of the city Jerusalem. It seems reasonable that the Church, which increased rapidly at first, should be carefully instructed in the events of the life of Jesus, with which the Apostles were familiar; and it was to meet this want of the early Christians that the Evangelists wrote. At the same time the Christian Church began in common life, not in external written laws, as the Jewish Church had done. The Christians received the words of grace and truth from the lips of the Apostles. They would naturally, therefore, feel less regard to the exact order of events in relation to a written Gospel of parchment, while they had the Apostles with them. But as the Apostles died off it became more important to preserve their testimony, and the manuscript gospel rose in value. Meanwhile, the exact date of its origin was lost, though there was no doubt at all of the fact of its authorship. It is an ingenious and satisfactory argument, though too long to be presented here, by which the learned show from the style of St. Matthew, the general date at which he wrote. All agree that it was the first of the four Gospels, and that it was written before the fall of the holy city.

Another question of great difficulty is, in what language St. Matthew wrote. On this the Presbyterian, Mr. Barnes, says: "The Fathers, without any exception, assert that Matthew wrote his gospel for the use of Christians in Palestine; and all say that it was written in the Hebrew dialect. This testimony it *is impossible to refute, and the fact is therefore established.* In a question about mere matter-of-fact, no modern can be better informed than those who lived near the time of the fact recorded." A most healthful principle of investigation in matters of sacred lore and church discipline, and concisely expressed. Bishop Tomline in view of the same evidence ventures no farther than "many ancient Fathers" and, "in a question of fact, the concurrent voice of antiquity *perhaps* ought to be decisive with us." Many learned men have argued against the opinion that St. Matthew wrote in Hebrew. Still it seems to be the opinion of our own, as of all other ages, that such was the fact. As he wrote for Jews, he has conformed his narrative, in many respects, to their more intimate knowledge of Scripture, argues frequently from their prophets, and avoids explaining familiar customs.

But though we may decide this question, in accordance with the good men of the past, we find no facts to explain to us, how the Gospel was translated into Greek, or by whom, or when the original perished, and how it should have been so soon neglected. These matters can give us no uneasiness. The very silence on these points, shows us either that St. Matthew also wrote his Gospel in Greek, or that the change took place very early, when Christians had the *infallible authority* of inspired men in their midst, and could not be left in doubt on matters of such importance. It is believed that St. John wrote his gospel as a complement to the other three. If so, and he at any time saw the Gospel of St. Matthew in Greek and approved it, we have a sufficient *imprimatur.* But these doubts ought to make us modest and reverent to that ancient Church, which, under God, preserved these records for us. The arguments of careless men against a due regard to the authority of the Fathers, may be put to silence by the principles which every earnest Christian scholar (such as Mr. Barnes) finds himself compelled to adopt when accounting for the great gift of the ancient Church to us, namely, the authentic books of Scripture. God has bound together the Church in one, so that we cannot break away from Ignatius, Athanasius, or Jerome, without loss. Let us receive the Gospel as we have it at their hands, saying, with the author above cited: "The proper inquiry is whether it [the Greek copy] had such evidence of inspiration as to be satisfactory to the Church in the times when they were under the direction of the Apostles. That it *had* such evidence none acquainted *with ancient history* will doubt." For the silence of the Fathers is the best proof of their entire satisfaction.

In all the copies and translations of the New Testament, St. Matthew's gospel is placed first. It shows a universal conviction, reaching back to the earliest times, that it was written first, and also that it serves as the fitting introduction to the others. The Fathers delighted in the mystical allusions of Ezekiel [i. 10] copied also by St. John [Rev. iv. 7] concerning the forms of a man, lion, ox and eagle, sustaining the throne of the Mediator. "Matthew was denoted" according to them, "by the *Man*, because he dwells chiefly on the humanity of Christ; Mark by the Lion, because he treats of His Resurrection; Luke by the Ox, because he insists on his Priesthood; John by the Eagle, because he describes the sacraments of His divinity."

St. Matthew seems to have written his Gospel with a particular view to the order of subjects, rather than of time. He begins with the Incarnation, showing the genealogy and birth of Jesus, according in all respects with ancient prophecies. He narrates the chief events of our Saviour's life in their general order. He gives three chapters to the Sermon on the Mount; gives examples through two chapters of the miracles of our Lord; one to the mission of the disciples; one to the

teachings suggested by the question of the Baptist; another to his public rebukes; one to parables, and thus onwards. We will find occasion to apply this principle in explaining these events, preferring the order of time given by St. Luke. An ancient writer has thus spoken of this peculiarity: "Matthew has arranged his narrative in a regular series of events. First, the birth; secondly, the baptism; thirdly, the temptation; fourthly, the teachings; fifthly, the miracles; sixthly, the Passion; seventhly, the Resurrection and the Ascension of Christ; desiring by this not only to set forth the history of Christ, *but to teach the order of the evangelic life.* It is naught that we are born of our parents, if we be not re-born again of God by water and the Spirit. After baptism we must resist the Devil. Then being, as it were, superior to all temptation, one is made fit to teach, and if he be a priest, let him teach and commend his teaching, as it were, by the miracles of a good life: if he be a layman, let him teach faith by his works. In the end we must take our departure from the stage of this world, and then remains that the reward of resurrection and glory follow the victory over temptation."

St. Matthew was well qualified for his work. He was not a man of much learning, and his style is not impeded by any of the arts of the ancient rhetoricians. It is a plain ungarnished tale such as a simple and honest-minded man would have given of things which he saw and heard. He hardly ever mentions himself. His forgetfulness of himself, his artless style, and his unhesitating declaration of facts, give to his narrative a degree of credit, which convinces the mind, while his evident sympathy with those portions of the truth, which were most useful and comforting to fallen nature, render it interesting and invaluable. His style is simple, native, clear and truthful, such as befitted one who had sat in the lowly seat of the publican, and studied human nature among the blue skies, green swelling hills and calm waters of Galilee. It is a fitting vehicle to bear the *Gospel*, or, as old Wickliffe wrote the two Saxon words god, or good-spell, i. e. the *good word*, to all who, like him, learn the dangers and evils of the stormy sea of human life.

CHAPTER I.

THE book of the generation of Jesus Christ,[a] the son of David,[b] the son of Abraham.[c]

2 Abraham[d] begat Isaac; and Isaac[e] begat Jacob; and Jacob[f] begat Judas and his brethren;

a Luke 3. 23. &c. *b* Psa. 132. 11; Jer. 23. 5. John 7. 42. Acts 2. 30. *c* Gen. 22. 18. Gal. 3. 16.

d Gen. 21. 2–5. *e* Gen. 25. 26. *f* Gen. 29. 35.

CHAPTER I.

1. *The book of the generation.* The list of the forefathers; or possibly, the book which relates the history of Jesus Christ, his pedigree, birth, actions, doctrines, death, &c. In either sense the words are a proper title to the Gospel, and were so used in the Hebrew writings. See Gen. v. 1; vi. 9. The Jews preserved with great care the registers of their families, from one of which this record of the family of Joseph was probably copied. As the Messiah was to be a descendant of David and Abraham, according to the ancient promises and prophecies, it was necessary for the writer, who claimed that Jesus was that Messiah, to demonstrate his lineage from them, at the very outset of his undertaking. ¶ *Jesus.* Saviour. See ver. 21. John xii. 47. ¶ *Christ. The Anointed.* The corresponding Hebrew word is *Messiah,*

derived from a verb, *to anoint with oil.* The Jews anointed their prophets, priests and kings, to consecrate them to their offices. See Ex. xxix. 7; 1 Sam. x. 1; 1 Kings. xix. 16. The pouring of oil on the head in this sacred rite, was symbolical. It signified the divine appointment to an office, and the gifts of spiritual grace, which alone could enable those who were set apart, to perform its duties. Jesus was to be called the anointed one, or Messiah, because he was sent into the world, by the Father, to be the great Prophet, Priest, and King, over the whole human race. Dan. ix. 24. As a Prophet he taught all truth (Deut. xviii. 15; Acts, iii. 22); as a Priest, he offered one perfect sacrifice for all sin (Heb. v. 10; vii. 27); as a King, he reigns over all his people, in an everlasting kingdom. Ps. ii. 6; John xviii. 37; Is. ix. 7. He was not anointed with oil, which was the symbol only, but with the Holy Ghost, called by David the "Spirit of gladness." Ps. xlv. 7; Heb. i. 9; Acts x. 38. This occurred first, privately, at his conception (Luke i. 35); again publicly at his baptism. Luke iii. 22; John iii. 34. ¶ *Son of David.* Descendant of David by natural lineage. In Hebrew every ancestor was called a parent, and every descendant, a son. It was requisite to show that Jesus was descended from David (Ps. cxxxii. 11), inasmuch as the Jews expected it, and would have rejected all other evidence, if this had been wanting. These first sixteen verses demonstrated this descent; and though in this late age we cannot verify every statement made in them, it is enough for us that those who knew the facts of the case were satisfied. Matt. xxii. 42; Acts xiii. 23. ¶ *Son of Abraham.* A name very dear to the Jews, who often boasted that they were Abraham's children. John viii. 33, 39. To him the promises had been made, which Christ was to fulfil. Gen. xii. 3; xxi. 12. He is therefore put forward as an ancestor of Jesus, in whom all the promises and prophecies had a perfect and glorious fulfilment.

2–16. A similar catalogue of the ancestry of our Lord is given by St. Luke, ch. iii. It differs, in many of the names, from this of St. Matthew. Jesus being the incarnate Son of God, born of the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, of a virgin, *could have no human sire* except in a legal sense. To establish this legal fiction, which was fully sufficient with the Jews, according to their own ideas and customs, was the apparent intention of this author. Now if one should disbelieve His Incarnation, then His human origin was of course by His reputed father Joseph, in a direct line from David. Therefore if the Son of God was made man, He was given by God to the family of David, and the promises were all verified. If only man, then He was the son of David by Joseph. The Jews were obliged to assent to this fact, or be silent. If we now living, believe that Jesus "was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary," we have need of no other argument to convince us that the author's reasoning was conclusive with his countrymen, than the certainty of the divine inspiration directing his pen. This same dilemma, which is such only to the unbeliever, our Lord pressed upon the Pharisees. "If David call him Lord, how is He then his son?" (ch. xxii. 42–45.) They were silenced. The difficulties which arise in comparing this register of names with that of St. Luke, has exercised the ablest minds and called out a great display of learned conjectures. The question is still an open one. We cannot decide which of these ingenious conjectures is the right solution. Nor need we decide. He who believes in the fact of the Incarnation on other grounds, can easily dispense with this argument from the human descent of Jesus, which was meant for him only *indirectly*, when he reflects, that they for whom it was intended *directly*, found no serious objection in the two accounts. The Christian may allow, without danger to his faith, that there are some things which he does not know, when he is assured that those who did know all the facts, both friends and foes, accepted them. The caviller will seek in vain to prove mistakes, after eighteen centuries have passed

3 And Judas[g] begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat[h] Esrom; and Esrom begat[i] Aram;

[g] Gen. 38. 29, 30. [h] Gen. 46. 12. [i] Ruth 4. 19.

away. We may allow that one of these solutions offered by scholars is the true one, and confess that we know not which is. We need not perplex ourselves, when we are convinced of one fact, that the veracity and correctness of these authors rest upon their characters, inspiration, and the silence of all those who could properly have found fault. The following explanations of three of the most venerable Fathers of the early Church are offered, that the reader may choose among them for himself. *St. Jerome*, who lived A. D. 378, a learned presbyter and monk of Bethlehem, thus speaks of this difficulty:—"This passage is objected to by the Emperor Julian, in his Discrepancy of the Evangelists. 'Matthew calls Joseph the son of Jacob. Luke makes him the son of Heli.' Answer. He did not know the Scripture manner; one was his father *by nature*, the other *by law*. For we know that God commanded by Moses, that if a brother or near kinsman (Deut. xxv.) died without children, another should take his wife to raise up seed to his brother and kinsman. But of this matter Africanus the chronologist and Eusebius of Cæsarea have disputed more fully." *Eusebius*, archbishop of Cæsarea, lived A. D. 315, and thus explains:—"For Matthan and Melchi at different periods had each a son by one and the same wife, Jesca. Matthan, who traced through Solomon, first had her, and died leaving one son, Jacob by name. As the law forbade not a widow, either dismissed from her husband or after the death of her husband, to be married to another, so Melchi, who traced through Matthan, being of the same tribe but of another race, took his widow to his wife, and begat Heli his son. Thus shall we find Jacob and Heli, though of a different race, yet by the same mother, to have been brethren; one of whom, namely, Jacob, after Heli his brother was deceased without issue, married his wife, and begat on her the third, Joseph, by nature indeed and reason his own son; whereupon also it is written, *and Jacob begat Joseph*. But by the law he was the son of Heli: for Jacob being his brother, raised up seed to him. Thus the genealogy of both, as recited by Matthew and Luke, stands right and true: Matthew saying, *And Jacob begat Joseph:* Luke saying, *Which was the son, as it was supposed* (for he adds this withal), *of Joseph, which was the son of Heli, which was the son of Melchi*. Nor could he more significantly or properly express that way of generation according to the Law, which was made by a certain adoption that had respect to the dead, carefully leaving out the word *begetting* throughout even unto the end." Saith St. Augustine, bishop of Hippo, A. D. 396:—"And suitably does Luke, who relates Christ's ancestry, not in the opening of his Gospel but at his Baptism, follow the line of *His adoption*, as thus more clearly pointing him out as the Priest that should make atonement for sin. For by adoption we are made the sons of God by believing in the Son of God. But *by the descent according to the flesh* which Matthew follows, we rather see that the Son of God was for us made man. Luke sufficiently shows that he called Joseph the son of Heli, because he was adopted by Heli, by his calling Adam the son of God, as he was set in Paradise, though he lost it afterwards by sinning." It is proper to add that other learned men explain the difficulty, and with great appearance of truth, by supposing that Heli was actually the father of Mary, who was beyond doubt of the house and lineage of David. See Lu. 1, 32.

3. *Thamar*. Four women are mentioned by name in this register against each of whom some crime had been charged. Thamar, Rahab, Ruth (heathenism), and Bathsheba. Three kings are omitted, for their crimes and the curse denounced against their race, namely, Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah. That royal line, in which the Saviour

4 And Aram begat Aminadab, and Aminadab begat Naasson[j]; and Naasson begat[k] Salmon;

5 And Salmon begat Booz of [l] Rachab; and Booz begat[m] Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;

6 And Jesse begat[n] David the king; and David the king begat [o] Solomon of her *that had been the wife* of Urias;

7 And Solomon begat [p] Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa;

8 And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias;

j 1 Chron. 2. 10. *k* Ruth 4. 20. *l* Josh. 6. 25; Ruth 4. 21. *m* Ruth 4. 13.

n 1 Sam. 17. 12. *o* 2 Sam. 12. 24. *p* 1 Chron. 3. 10.

appeared to perfect the promises which had been made to the righteous Abraham, was not free from the sin, which was brought on the race by the first Adam, and which was to be forgiven and done away by Christ, the second Adam.

8. *Ozias*, Uzziah, 1 Kings xv. 32. Three kings are omitted. The Jews omitted the names of persons stained with crimes, from their genealogies. Five descents are left out in Ezra vii. compared with 1 Chron. xi. The whole tribe of Dan is passed over in Rev. vii.

16. *The husband.* The one legally betrothed, or espoused by promise. The Jews gave this name to persons under promise of marriage. See Gen. xxix. 21; Deut. xxii. 24. St. Matthew ends his register with Joseph, by the male line the reputed father of Jesus. The words *of whom* are feminine, and refer to Mary. That public tables of families, besides those given in the Old Testament, were kept by the Jews, we may collect from Ezra and Nehemiah. St. Luke mentions that "Anna was of the tribe of Aser;" St. Paul, that he was of the tribe of Benjamin. From some such table this list must have been filled out. Joseph had married in his own tribe and family. There were no records of female lines. Mary was of the tribe and family of David, as is evident from her going to Bethlehem to be enrolled, and from the words of the angel, "the throne of His father David." Luke i. 32. Mary made no question of the correctness of the words.

17. *Fourteen generations.* Fourteen names. A generation is the lifetime of a man, about thirty years; but here it is used rather as a summation of the foregoing names. The number is a convenient help to the memory, and is not exact. It is not necessary that it should be exact, if it does with a little accommodation conveniently help one to remember this list. The Jews counted always the first and last of any cluster of names, and in going on to the next, they repeated the last name, as first on the next list. In these fourteens David is last on the first list and first on the second, and Josias last on the second and first on the third. Nor are these lists merely notional, they mark great national distinctions. The first fourteen persons lived under the prophets and judges from Abraham till David; the second under the kings during the period of the prosperity of the nation, and the existence of the first temple; the last under the Asmonean priests, from the captivity till the coming of Him in whom centred the glories of all their sacred orders. ¶ *Carrying away into Babylon.* See 2 Chron. xxxvi. It occurred 588 years before Christ. Nebuchadnezzar carried the Israelites captive to Babylon, as God had threatened them by the prophets. There they remained in a miserable condition for seventy years, as a punishment for their sins against the law of Moses, and a warning to them to refrain from idolatry. Deut. xxviii. 15, &c.; Ezek. xx. Babylon was situated on the river Euphrates, a city of great power and wealth, the capital of ancient Chaldea. Its splendor was almost fabulous. The prophets use the loftiest epithets to tell of its magnificence; the Golden City! Is. xiv. 4; the glory of kingdoms, the glory of the Chaldees' excellency, Is.

9 And Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias;

10 And Ezekias[a] begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias;

11 And[*] Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon:

12 And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat[b] Salathiel; and Salathiel begat[c] Zorobabel;

13 And Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor:

14 And Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim: and Achim begat Eliud;

15 And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob;

16 And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

17 So all the generations from Abraham to David, *are* fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon *are* fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ *are* fourteen generations.

18 ¶ Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before[d] they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

a 2 Kings 20. 21. * *Some read Josias begat Jakim and Jakim begat Jechonias.*
b 1 Chron. 3. 17. *c* Neh. 12. 1. *d* Luke 1. 27, &c. * *The fifth year before the common account called Anno Domini.*

xiii. 19. Its power was first made use of by the Providence of God to punish the kingdom of Israel for its idolatries, and then the pride of Babylon was humbled to the dust. See Jer. l.

18. *Birth of Jesus Christ.* This is the event which marks the Christian era. The practice of dating from it began as late as A. D. 730. Learned men are of opinion that an error of from four to six years was made in the common calculations. In this book, the true era is fixed after the tables of Rev. Dr. Jarvis, historiographer of the Church, as being six years and one week earlier than January 1, A. D. 1, by the common date. ¶ *On this wise.* In this way. As follows. ¶ *Espoused.* A Jewish maiden was often espoused or contracted to a man a year or more before marriage. See Gen. xxiv. 55; Judges xiv. 8. She was called his wife from the time of her espousals, and any unfaithfulness during this period was considered and punished as adultery. Deut. xxii. 23, 24. ¶ *With child of the Holy Ghost.* A miraculous conception. Thus "God was manifest in the flesh." Our Saviour received human flesh from the Virgin, but His origin was by the Spirit of God. Luke i. 35. This is called His Incarnation, His being made flesh. It is taught throughout the New Testament, and summed up in the Nicene Creed, which says, "We believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one subtance with the Father, by whom all things were made, who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man." God had spoken before by prophets, but now by his Son. Heb. i. 1, &c.; see Phil. ii. 5–12; John i. 1, &c. The Church has always celebrated the feast of the nativity, or Christmas, December 25th, by solemn services, to express her joy and gratitude to God for the gift of his only Son.

19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded[a] to put her away privily.

20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his

[b] Deut. 24. 1.

In Him were fulfilled all the promises made to a ruined world. Gen. iii. 15; 1 Tim. i. 15. ¶ *Holy Ghost.* See Luke i. 35.

19. *A just man.* The righteous man, saith David, is ever *merciful.* By a just or righteous man is meant in Scripture a pious or good man, one believing the whole law and regulating his life by it, by both its mercy and its justice. See Ps. i. As such, Joseph had pity on her, and was unwilling to bring her before the tribunal, to be sentenced to death by stoning, which would have been "making her a public example." Deut. xxii. 23, 24. Believing her to have become a guilty woman, he was desirous to pursue the milder course allowed him by the Mosaic Law. Deut. xxiv. ¶ *Was minded.* Was disposed, was meditating this course. It required great caution. The law required him to give some sufficient reason for the act, and he was considering on the best way of doing it, that he might save his conscience and avoid unnecessary scandal. ¶ *To put her away privily.* To divorce her privately. This was done by the husband giving a paper to the woman, setting forth that she was free from his control. He was delaying the divorce, perhaps from affection to Mary or from grief. He knew her to be a pious and pure maiden and was perplexed. Mary had been absent on a visit of three months, to her cousin Elizabeth. Lu. i. 56. It was after her return of course that Joseph noticed her condition, and was minded to put her away.

20. *The angel of the Lord.* Rather *an* angel, namely Gabriel, see Ch. ii. 13. ¶. *In a dream.* In this way God had frequently made known his will to pious men. See Gen. xx. 3; xxviii. 12. Dan. vii. 1. There were about all such inspired visions sufficient marks to signify that they came from God. Since the volume of revelation has been completed, Christians have no occasion for these inspired dreams, and are not so visited. The angels now minister in other ways to the heirs of salvation. The angel salutes Joseph as Son of David, to prepare him for the annunciation of the Messiah. He was a poor man but of a royal race. He had feared disgrace to his honest name, he now finds that Mary is to be honored above women, in becoming the mother of the Lord, and fears no longer. The Virgin would have been exposed to unjust and cruel suspicions, if Joseph had been permitted to separate from her. ¶ *Of the Holy Ghost.* This is one of the testimonies of angelic beings to the divinity of Christ. Lu. i. 32, 35; ii. 11. They are greater in power and might than we, and have clearer knowledge of celestial events and of God's will. They declared the descent of Jesus to be of the Holy Ghost. Thus was He "seen of angels." 1 Tim. iii. 16.

21. *Jesus.* In Hebrew it is Joshua. Compare Acts vii. 45. Heb. iv. 8. It there means Joshua the son of Nun. Numb. xiii. 16. The name is composed of two Hebrew words signifying "Jehovah his help." Joshua was at first named Oshea; Jah was afterward added by Moses when he was sent to spy out the land of Canaan. He received the Israelites from Moses, led them into Canaan, and by the help of the Lord established them there. He acted in types as the *Saviour* of that race, that which our Lord Jesus performed in truth for the souls of men. This name Jesus

name JESUS,[a] for he shall save his people from their sins.

22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying:[b]

a Luke 2. 11. 1. 69–71.

b Is. 7. 14.

was given to the Son of God, at His incarnation, as His name among men. It is explained by the angel "He shall save his people from their sins," both from the power of sin, by making them holy, and from its eternal punishment, by obtaining pardon from God. It is upon this, and such like promises, that the Christian depends for his salvation. If Jesus has not lived and died to save us from sin and lead us to the land of true rest, then we are without hope.—But having a firm assurance of his incarnation and atonement, we have hope in Him, that if we keep His commandments, we shall at last receive from Him "the rest that remaineth for the people of God."

22. *That it might be fulfilled.* These are the words of St. Matthew, not of the angel. They are thought by some good men, to mean, only, "thus it was fulfilled." But there seems to be no danger in giving them their plain force, namely, this happened that the words of the prophet might be verified in their full sense. For the same Lord who inspired the prophets of the Jews, also foresaw the future in all its events, and therefore so shaped the words and events that they should exactly correspond. The events fulfilled the words; the words proved the events to be ordered by the Omniscient. St. Matthew cites that part of the prophecy of Isaiah ch. vii. 14, which related to this one event of the incarnation of the Son of God. And He was not incarnate simply that Isaiah should be made a true prophet, but that by the prophecy which had been made 740 years before, agreeing with the event, men should believe that Jesus was sent from God. The word *fulfilled* admits different shades of meaning, all however consistent with this view. 1st. Days are fulfilled, when they are observed and finished, Gen. l. 3. 2nd. A prediction is fulfilled, when it is fully and finally accomplished. Dan. iv. 33. Matt. v. 18. 3rd. A type or ceremony is fulfilled when the event or character which it taught appears. Thus sacrifices foreshadowed the great sacrifice of Christ. Heb. ix. 4th. When the previous prediction, and some former partial application are seen to be more fully renewed by the life or actions of the Lord Jesus. In this latter sense we understand this passage. There had been a partial fulfilment of this prophecy of Isaiah near the time when it was uttered. The wicked king Ahaz, alarmed at a threatened invasion of Judea, was about to apply to the Assyrians for assistance. Isaiah was sent to him by the Lord, to command him to put his trust in God alone for deliverance, and to ask of Him a sign of His gracious intention. Ahaz refused, and God volunteered a sign by the prophet, namely, that the young wife of Isaiah should bear a son, and that before the child should know, "to refuse the evil and to choose the good," i. e. before he should come to years of discretion, the hostile kings whom Ahaz feared should both perish. But this prophecy was couched in language, the literal fulfilment of which, could and did happen only in the incarnation of the Eternal Son of God. We are to regard the former fulfilment therefore only as an *acted prophecy*, an historical type and occasion of foretelling the miraculous birth of Emmanuel of a pure virgin. It is not uncommon to find in the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah, combined with prophecies to particular individuals, for we may regard almost all which is recorded there as typical or prophetic of Him. The prophecy is often fulfilled soon after it is given, and finally accomplished in Christ, partly at his birth, fully at his future coming to judge the world. For instance, Ps. ii. 8, applied first all to Solomon, who was a type of the Prince of Peace. It then received greater force in Christ,

23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

24 Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife:

25 And knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born son; and he called his name JESUS.

‖ or, *his name shall be called.*

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when he began to conquer the evil of the world: will receive its full meaning in the future great day of the Lord. By this plain rule of interpretation, the reader of the gospel may satisfy his mind and repel all the cavils of unbelief, in such passages as the present.

23. *Emmanuel.* A compound Hebrew word, meaning God with us. The interpretation was doubtless added in the text, when this Gospel was translated into Greek. This name given to the Lord Jesus declares his nature to be of one substance with the Father. Many Hebrew names are made up with the name of God; as Eli, my God; Isaiah, Jah, i. e., Jehovah will save, etc. The name Emmanuel might possibly have been given to the son of Isaiah (of which we have no evidence), and signified God with us, in the sense that God was manifestly favorable to his people, in giving them this child as a sign of his special care of them. But in the use here made of it by St. Matthew, especially as we should read 'He shall be called' as meaning 'He shall be,' we must believe the divinity of Christ to be acknowledged, that He was truly God manifest in the flesh. Isaiah's words in this same prophecy (ix. 6.) beyond all cavil, apply to Christ, and describe Him as God. See 2 Cor. v. 19. John xiv. 11. Col. ii. 8, 9. John i. 1. This demonstrates the doctrine of the second Article, of the XXXIX. '*Of the Word or Son of God made flesh.*' "The Son which is the word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, of her substance; so that the two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man; who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried to reconcile the Father to us, and to be a sacrifice not only for original guilt, but also for actual sins of men." On this foundation the Christian faith rests. Let us remember, in humble awe, that we are to believe these truths as they are revealed, though the human mind cannot pretend to grasp them fully.

24. *Took unto him his wife.* Espoused her, acknowledged her to be his wife. There is no evidence that the Virgin Mary had other children, and on the other hand the pious feeling and tradition of the whole church, from the first, have been opposed to the notion, as unworthy of one who had been so highly honored in the birth of the Saviour of men. The persons who are called the *brethren* of Jesus (Matt. xii. 46. John vii. 5) were his cousins, as is shown in the notes on these passages. When Jesus died on the cross, He gave his mother in charge to St. John, telling her, 'Woman, behold thy son.' If she had had other sons at the time, this would have been contrary to those laws of family order, which our Lord both obeyed and encouraged.

25. *First-born son.* Not that others followed, but simply that He was the Son by whom she became a mother. The Hebrew word *b-cor*, as every scholar can testify, has no allusion to any child which may or may not follow the first. We are wholly ignorant, however, of the life of Joseph and Mary. She is revered as blessed, but may not be regarded superstitiously, or as miraculously lifted above her race and sex. She was a woman of humble, innocent, sincere piety, severely tried by the very blessing which she received. Lu. ii. 35. St. Jerome, a learned monk and pres-

CHAPTER II.

NOW when Jesus was born[1] in Bethlehem of Judea in the

‖ 4th year before the account called A. D.

days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

2 Saying, Where is he that is

byter of the fourth century, says:—From these words, first-born son, some most erroneously suppose that Mary had other sons, saying that *first*-born can only be said of one that has brethren. But this is the manner of Scripture, to call the first-born not only one who is followed by brethren, but the *first*-born of the mother. For if he only is first-born who was followed by brethren, no first birth could be due to the priests (Ex. xiii. 2) till such time as the second birth took place. He may have been called first-born among the elect through grace; but by nature, the only begotten of God the Father, the only son of Mary. ¶ *His name Jesus. Saviour.* The name was given on the eighth day, in the rite of circumcision. Lu. ii. 21. The prophets had given significance to this name, which is translated Saviour and Salvation. Ps. xiii. 5. cxix. 81. Joseph was obedient to the angel, and adopted the son of Mary, named and reared him as his own. St. Luke gives more of the events of the birth of Jesus than St. Matthew. See Lu. ch. ii. It occurred December 25, six years before the common date, as universal tradition and astronomical and historical calculations make manifest. This day has been observed by the church throughout all the world from the earliest times, certainly before A. D. 379, in commemoration of this precious gift of God, and the great blessings which followed the Incarnation. The Fathers have left sermons which were preached by them on that day. Our Church observes the same under the old name of Christmas, or the Nativity of Our Lord. She bids us partake of the holy Communion on that day with these words of devout thanksgiving: "We give thanks unto thee, O Lord, because Thou didst give Jesus Christ, thine only Son, to be born as at this time of a pure Virgin; who by the operation of the Holy Ghost was made very man of the substance of the Virgin Mary, His mother; and that without spot, to make us clean from all sin." And we unite in this Collect, as the student of this chapter may well do: "Almighty God, who hast given us Thy only begotten Son to take our nature upon Him, and as at this time to be born of a pure Virgin; grant that we, being regenerate, and made Thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit, through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the same Spirit, ever one God world without end. Amen."

> "Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,
> Hail the incarnate Deity,
> Pleased, as man with man to dwell,
> Jesus now Emanuel."—*Hymn* 45.

CHAPTER II.

1. *Jesus was born.* See notes Luke ii. 1—20. ¶ *Bethlehem of Judea.* Called *Judea* because there was another village of the same name situated in the tribe of Zebulon. Josh. xix. 15. It was called also Bethlehem Ephratah, i. e., in the land of Ephrath. Gen. xxxv. 19. Ps. cxxxii. 6. The words signify, Beth, *the house*, lehem, *of bread.* It was the town and birth-place of King David (Ruth i. 1, 2. I. Sam. xvi. 1, 18) and the burial place of Rachel. It is called at this time Beit-lehem, and is about six miles south of Jerusalem, still visited by thousands of Christian pilgrims yearly. The monks claim to have preserved the knowledge of all the spots which are celebrated in the Scriptures, and show the place at the east of the village where the Saviour was born. The original church, built by the empress Helena over it, fifteen hundred years ago, still exists, as also the tombs of certain eminent early Christians, Jerome, Eusebius, Paula, and others. The town lies on a ridge, overlooking a valley which opens to view the Dead Sea in the distance. The region is fer-

born King[a] of the Jews? for we have seen his[b] star in the east,

a Zech. 9. 9. *b* Numb. 24. 17; Isaiah 60. 3.

and are come to worship him.

3 When Herod the King had heard *these things* he was troubled

tile though neglected. Fruits, vines and olives grow here extremely well. ¶ *Days of Herod the King.* This fixes in some measure the date of this event. In the 713th year of the city Rome, the Senate passed a decree making Herod King of Judea, then aged 33. Three years after, Herod with the aid of Sosius took the city and became king in fact, as he had been already by right of the decree. In the 32–35 of Herod Jesus was born, in a time of universal peace. Herod reigned 34–37 years, and died at the age of seventy, in the year of Rome 749, A. D. 2.—Herod the Great was an Edomite, the son of Antipater. He professed the Jewish faith. He was a man of great energy, courage, sagacity, enterprise, also of great subtlety, boldness and cruelty. He gained his title by success in war and intrigue, and by his public works. He repaired the Temple of the Jews, and built several cities, and left a name that can never be forgotten in history. He was father of Herod mentioned Matt. xiv. 1, grandfather to Herod Agrippa spoken of in Acts xii. 1, 6. He extirpated the Maccabean family, and being a *foreigner* and the viceroy of a heathen power, he put an end to the political existence of the Jewish kingdom. St. Matthew follows the custom of ancient authors in dating from the reign of a man so well known, and perhaps would suggest the fulfilment of two ancient prophecies: 1, that of Jacob, Gen. xlix. 10. The Sceptre departed from Judah, when the son of an Idumaean ascended the throne. 2, That of Daniel ix. 24. It had been revealed to him, that in a set time 'seventy weeks,' i. e., counting each day (70 times 7 days) for a year, in 490 years the Messiah would appear. This period expired in the time of Herod, two years before his death. ¶ *Wise men.* Magi or magicians. They were learned men of the East, who studied chiefly the sciences of astronomy, theology, natural philosophy and medicine. They mixed up with their sound learning many superstitious notions and practices, such as astrology, divination and magic. They had as a general thing juster notions of God and his worship than the other heathen. Daniel in his time had condescended to be 'master of the magicians' (Dan. iv. 9; v. 11), and is believed to have left among his associates and successors much of that diviner knowledge revealed to him. We are not to regard these men as mere sorcerers. They came from a good motive, were led by the power of God to find their king. They are supposed to have been three in number, of royal degree, having come out of Arabia or Persia. The gifts which they brought are found in those lands. "Kings of Arabia and Saba shall bring gifts." Ps. lxxii. 10. *Psalter.* These countries lay to the east of Judea.

2. *Where is He, &c.?* The Maccabees, the Jewish rulers, had been destroyed. Herod was not king by divine right. Where is this lawful king? God did not lead them, at first, to Bethlehem, but left them to search for Jesus, in order that they might announce His birth to the people. Heathen authors have left the record, that there existed a general expectation among men of that age that some great king was to appear on earth, in the East, who "should proceed from Judea and possess the dominion;" who should restore all things to peace and order. The Jews were anxiously looking for their Messiah, now that the seventy weeks of Daniel were expiring, and their sceptre evidently wrested from them. They were scattered through all nations of men, and of course would communicate their opinions and hopes to others. And Daniel had held a rank among these very magi at the court of Persia, which would account for their question. They may have been acquainted with his writings and the whole Jewish Scrip-

and all Jerusalem with him.

4 And when he had gathered

tures. A prophet of Mesopotamia, "a wise man of the East," Balaam, had been the first to join in his prophecy the *Star* and the *Sceptre* of the Messiah. Numb. xxiv. 17. ¶ *His star.* This is so named because it appeared in the sky, with the form, radiance and apparent situation of the stars, but of course was some luminous appearance, nearer to the earth; for the stars could not be seen to move and stand over any single house as this did. Again they would not have been astonished at one star more becoming visible among the myriads on high. It was as we know only a temporary provision to guide these men to Jesus—it appeared and disappeared, moved slowly before them, till it stood over the end of their journey. It is a pleasing suggestion of some one, that the luminous appearance, which they first saw, was the vision of the angels to the shepherds, seeming at the distance which they were like a star. After they left Jerusalem a similar appearance guided them to the inn at Bethlehem. It could not have been a comet, for they were regarded as portents of misery. It was a strange visitant to this earth for this one purpose. They saw it, consulted their lore and their books, and were led by the Spirit of God to the just conclusion that it was *His* star, i. e., the star of the King of the Jews. ¶ *In the East.* "We in the east have seen it."—The star of course appeared to them in the direction of Jerusalem, or they would not have come thither to ask for this information. ¶ *To worship Him.* Among the ancient heathen, kings were regarded with superstitious reverence, as either gods or children of divinities. The Egyptians began this custom of deifying their monarchs, to which most other nations conformed. Hence *worship* was offered in much the same manner to a king and a divinity. In other cases with equal idolatry, as the idol was a false god and the king only a man. But in this case the magi, in worshipping the King, do it after their country's custom, on bended knee or prostrate, with every expression of reverence—as to a divinity. Such He was. The wise men were divinely led. They may have afterward learned who this King was, and, according to the gentle tradition of the Church been saved by faith in Him. Their notions were obscure, and their worship was imperfect. See Matt. xviii. 26. The Jews only as a nation worshipped *God alone*, and many of the pagan persecutions of Christians were intended to compel them to pay this idolatrous service to images of the Roman Emperor. See Mat. iv. 10, Dan. iii. 18.

3. *Had heard.* They were probably men of consequence and wealth, and attended by a retinue of guards, servants, &c. It was the intention of Providence that their object should be extensively known to the Jews, as an annunciation of their Messiah. ¶ *Troubled.* Agitated, put in commotion as water. John v. 4, 7. The word may apply to opposite feelings, fear, and expectation of a joyful event. Herod was agitated with fear, all Jerusalem, i. e. the Jews of the city, with hope and joy. Herod, who had gained the kingdom by crime and held it against the religious opinions of the people, always sat uneasily upon his throne. The news of any claiming to be legitimate king with signs from heaven, were dreadful. The Jews, ever rebellious, and now superstitiously obedient to the letter of their system, abominated Herod and the Romans, and were easily fired with hopes of their Messiah coming to deliver them from their oppressors. ¶ *All Jerusalem.* All the people of the city. Jerusalem, 'the city of peace,' was anciently called Salem (Gen. xiv. 18), and afterwards Jebus. 2 Sam. v. 6–9. It had been the capital of the Jewish theocracy from the time of David. There the temple stood, where all worshipped. They visited it yearly, and earnestly desired to die and be buried near it. It was the scene of many of the sublime events of Holy Scripture. It is now called by the Arabs El-Kods, *The Holy.* It stands on three eminences: Zion,

all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

5 And they said unto them, In Bethlehem of Juda: for thus it is written by the [a] prophet,

a Mich. 5. 2; Jno. 7. 42.

Moriah, and Calvary; the last having been formerly beyond the walls. It is surrounded by a high wall, outside of which are deep valleys on three sides. It is on the borders of the lands assigned to Benjamin and Judah, about forty miles from the Mediterranean and twenty-five from the Jordan and Dead Sea. The city was destroyed by the Romans A. D. 70, and rebuilt by Hadrian A. D. 136, who named it Elia-capitolina. In the time of Constantine, the former name was restored. It was held by the Christians for several centuries, till it was conquered by the Mahometans, who hold possession of it to this day.

4. *Chief Priests and Scribes.* They composed the grand council or consistory of the nation, called the Sanhedrim. They had cognizance of all causes, civil and ecclesiastical, and were able to satisfy Herod in this matter. The Sanhedrim was composed of seventy members, beside the Chief Priest, in imitation of the elders appointed by Moses. Numb. xi. 16. The High Priests were the high priest for the time, together with those who had been in the office, and displaced, by the whim of their pagan rulers, contrary to the custom of Moses. There were the heads of the twenty-four sacerdotal courses, called Chief Priests or Elders (1 Chron. xxiv. 7–19) and the Scribes or lawyers. Their place of meeting was in a hall near the Temple, or at extraordinary times in the high priest's palace, also near the temple. The *Scribes* were of two classes, civil and ecclesiastical. Their chief study was the sacred oracles. They copied them out when necessary, and kept all public writings; expounded the meaning of the laws of Moses, taught the people, and explained the traditions and opinions of the most learned men. They are called lawyers (Matt. xxii. 35) or doctors, i. e. teachers of the law. Luke v. 17. They seem to have been mostly of the sect of the Pharisees. They were familiar with their Scriptures, and could demonstrate to Herod at once, that Christ was to be born in Bethlehem. They were blind only when spiritual truth and mercy were revealed by God. ¶ *Where Christ,* &c. Where the Messiah, the King of the Jews, should be born. We should fix in the memory once for all the distinction of these names of our Lord. He was named Jesus as an individual, Christ by virtue of his office; or Jesus as He was a *man,* Christ or Messiah as He was sent from God. Herod did not inquire where *Jesus* should be born, for of that name there was nothing yet known, but where the Messiah or Christ should appear. The object of much of the argument of the Gospels is this, to show *that Jesus was the Christ.* We shall never find the two names confounded by the Evangelists, as is too common in these days. See Acts ii. 36. John ix. 22.

5. *By the Prophet.* By Micah, ch. v. 2. St. Matthew appears to quote these words as the words of the Sanhedrim in reply to the question of the king: or he might have added the noble words which follow them: "Whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting," i. e. who is God from everlasting. And he says Bethlehem in the land of Judah, in place of Bethlehem-Ephratah, because their answer had made this verbal change. Herod, a foreigner, might more easily understand the passage with this alteration. Comp. Ruth i. 1, with iv. 11. This variation, instead of giving any room for cavil, is rather a confirmation of the veracity of the statement. It shows their exact knowledge of the case. They use a synonyme Judah, for Ephratah, because they knew them to mean exactly the same thing, and make the change in order to explain the prophet's words to one who was only a proselyte to their religion. No forger of history can be exact and consistent in these trifling particulars.

6 And thou Bethlehem, *in* the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a governor, that shall[‖] rule my people Israel.

7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

‖ or, *feed.*

8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go, and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found *him*, bring me word again[a] that I may come and worship him also.

9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and lo, the star, which they saw in the east,

a Ps. 55. 21.

6. *Art not the least.* This translation of Micah differs slightly from the Hebrew as we now have it, and from the Septuagint Greek; but the meaning in the three is exactly the same. The passage exactly described the fact of our Lord's birth, and was properly cited by the Jews. Though the place was small, 'a little one,' it was to be famous for the birth-place of the Son of David, and honored above the grander cities, which outvied it in splendor. ¶ *Governor.* A leader, a guide, as Joshua had been to the Israelites. ¶ *Rule.* In the margin *feed*, for the original signifies both; to rule as a shepherd does his flock. He guides them to green pastures, preserves, protects them, and requires their obedience that he may benefit them. Such is the Scriptural idea of the relation of ruler and ruled, in every rank of life—the ruler, master, father, husband, rules, that he may bless the ones ruled. See John x. 11. Is. xl. 10. 11. Ps. xxiii. 1 Pet. ii. 25.

7. *Privily.* In secret, so as not to call public attention to it. ¶ *Inquired of them diligently.* Herod was a man of great cunning and ruthlessness in carrying out his purposes; as many events of his life show. He had no desire to discover a king, who would dethrone himself. Knowing that he could not intimidate nor bribe the magi into murdering the infant Jesus, he inquired of them secretly, that the Jews should not know it, the circumstances of the star's appearing, its time, form, situation, etc. We see the providence of God manifested, in His concealing the star from them for a season. They answered Herod's questions truly, yet left him none the wiser. They set out for Bethlehem and the star becomes visible again. ¶ *What time.* It was not visible at all times. It is thought by the best authorities, and most of the early Fathers, that Jesus was now a year old, so that the star had appeared to the Wise Men during the previous year. They had been consulting concerning it and travelling towards Jerusalem. Joseph appears to have abandoned Nazareth and fixed his abode in Bethlehem, perhaps with a desire of obeying the prophet, and marking the origin of Jesus from that place. But this human wisdom God rejects. Micah had said, "*Out of thee shall come, etc.*," which words were exactly fulfilled by the birth of Jesus.

8. *And he sent them, etc.* He will not have them linger—he will not go himself as yet—though it is only six miles off. Behold his energy. The magi were deceived, they imagined him piously inclined to do honor to this new prince, they hastened to fulfil their mission and return to him. This was his cunning. His only object in this treacherous course was to slay the child, as he had before murdered every living thing that opposed his power, even his own children. He deceived the magi, but there was One whom the wicked can never deceive, Who was watching over the helpless child.

9. *The star came, etc.* The Church from early times has celebrated a festival, January 6th, in remembrance of this visit of the magi, by the leading of a star, called the Epiphany, anciently Epiphanies in the plural, i. e. the manifestations or glorious appearances of Christ. Nazianzen has left a sermon on "the holy lights." St. Augustine

went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

[b] 10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced[a] with exceeding great joy.

11 ¶ And when they were come into the house, they saw the

a Is. 9. 2; 11. 10; 42. 6; 60. 1–3.

speaks of it as celebrated by the whole Church, the Donatist schismatics excepted. Three great events are said to have occurred on this same day of the year. 1. This event which is here related. These magi were Gentiles, and were led by this special miracle in their favor, not as individuals, but as the representatives of the whole Gentile world, the nations who were not in the covenant made by Moses. The shepherds were representatives of the Jews, the chosen nation. That which was said to the shepherds (Luke ii. 10–14), was doubtless impressed upon the minds of the magi, that this was a King sent down from God, to save a ruined world. 2. The Epiphany celebrates the manifestation of the glory of Christ, which was made at His baptism, as related in the Second Lesson of Morning Prayer. Luke iii. 22. 3. Also the exhibition of divine power in the first of the grand series of his miracles, that of Cana. See Second Lesson, Evening Prayer. John ii. Christians have always viewed these wise men with tender interest, as miraculously led to present unto the infant king, the first fruits of the Gentiles, to fulfil the prophecy, "Gentiles shall come to Thy light, and kings to the brightness of Thy rising." Is. lx. 3. We may learn from it joyfully to adore the love of God, which was shown to us Gentiles, in providing a Saviour for those who were His enemies. See 1 Tim. ii. 4. John iii. 16. And we should learn to improve this mercy, and to walk not in the darkness of our own judgment, but in the light, which Christ gives, of the will of God, and the paths of righteousness. See Eph. v. 8. 1 John ii. 9.

11. *The house.* Jesus had been born, if we receive the testimony offered by the monks of Bethlehem, in a cave or grotto cut out of the solid rock, which was sometimes used as a stable. But it is probable that at this time, a year afterwards, His parents occupied some house in the town. ¶ *Worshipped Him.* Paid Him the homage due, according to their ideas, to kings. Doubtless some impressions of the greatness of this Prince of Peace, had been received in their following this celestial guide the star, in Jerusalem, from conversation with the learned Jews, and from their own meditations. Wise men of that day in all nations, saw the need of a divine messenger to restore the sinful and ruined world to order and peace. These bow humbly down before a Deliverer, though His only court and guards are an aged man, and a weak virgin mother. ¶ *Opened their treasures.* Rather the receptacles containing them, their sacks or chests, in which they carried these things. ¶ *Gold, frankincense, and myrrh.* These were native products of Arabia or Saba, and according to the custom of the East, then and now, they would not come to honor a king, without the best which they could bring. See Gen. xliii. 11. 1 Sam. x. 27. 1 Kings x. 2. Frankincense or olibanum. Little is known concerning it. It was a resinous gum, occurring mostly in small round kernels, of a light yellow, and semi-transparent. It burned with a pleasant odor, and diffused a dense smoke around. It was used in the worship of the temple, mixed with sweet spices. Ex. xxx. 34–38. Also by the High Priest once in the year. Lev. xvi. 13. The heathen also used it. *Myrrh* was also a resin, of a yellow or reddish color, and bitter taste, whence came the name. It flows from a tree common in Arabia, and is found in small round grains. It has been in demand in all ages, first for embalming the dead, and mixing with perfumes, next for mingling with wines, and as a medicine. Irenæus, an early Father, allegorizes after this manner: "They offered myrrh (used about the dead) because He was to die for mankind; gold because He was a king; and

young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they‖ presented unto him gifts;[a] gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

12 And being warned of God in a dream[b] that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt;

15 And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the [c]prophet, saying,

‖ *offered.* *a* Ps. 72. 10. Is. 60. 0. *b* Numb. 12. 6. Job 33. 15, 16.

c Hos. 11. 1.

frankincense (used in temples) because He was God." Better perhaps Bishop Horne: "Let us offer Him faith, tried, precious, resplendent as gold; devotion ascending from fervent affections, like the smoke of frankincense from the holy altar; love, peace, joy, and the other graces of sanctification, fragrant, cheering, and diffusive like," myrrh and aloes, and all the chief spices of the merchant. See Ps. cxli. 2.

12. *Warned of God.* They would have returned to Jerusalem, being deceived as to the true character of Herod. This was prevented by the providence of God, which was often revealed to pagans by dreams. Dan. ii. 1, 20–22. They turn south from Bethlehem, and are gone before the wicked king could discover them.

13. *The angel of the Lord.* Rather *an* angel, probably Gabriel. See Luke i. 19. The phrase, 'The angel of the Lord,' in the Old Testament, frequently marks the second person of the Trinity. Gen. xxi. 17–19; xxii. 11, 12. Angels are *messengers* of God, pure spiritual beings endowed with supernatural powers, of various ranks of intelligence and might, serving God continually in heaven, or carrying out the works of creation under Him, or administering to the heirs of salvation upon earth. They rejoice to be employed in the works of grace, and their chief, Gabriel, appeared to announce the coming of Jesus—possibly to occupy to Him the same position which inferior angels hold with us. ¶ *Into Egypt.* Egypt was the nearest country in which he could be protected from the rage of Herod, and be also among his countrymen. It was about sixty miles distant. Before this visit of the wise men and the consequent flight, we must place the visit to the temple, forty days after the birth of the child. Lu. ii. 22. Lev. xii. 2–6. The visit of the magi we put with all antiquity a year and twelve days after the birth of Jesus.

15. *The death of Herod.* He died about one year afterwards, in the thirty-seventh year of his reign. See v. 19. ¶ *That it might be fulfilled.* See note, ch. i. 22. See Hosea xi. 1. This passage of the prophet, beyond a doubt, referred, in the first place, to the calling of the Israelites out of Egypt under Moses. Ex. iii. 10. The nation of Israel was dear to God, was tenderly loved as if a son. God heard his cry in Egypt, and came down of Himself to call him thence. This name of son belonged to them, because of the future mercy of God to be shown them in Christ (see 1 Cor. x. 4), and because they were types of Him, in leading souls on to a higher spiritual rest. It is common for prophetic language to have this double significancy. 1. Of the type: Israel, David, Solomon, and others. 2. Of the one fully perfecting the work which God had in hand. And in this case God called His Son, the

Out of Egypt have I called my Son.

16 ¶ Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men.

17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet,[a] saying,

18 In Rama was there a voice

[a] Jer. 31. 15.

Israelites out of Egypt, to give them a country here, His Son our Lord, to give Him 'the heathen for his inheritance.'

16. *Mocked of the wise men.* His intentions frustrated. The wicked are always suspicious. Herod supposed that the wise men had discovered his evil thoughts and deceived him, whereas they had acted in simple faith. ¶ *Exceeding wroth.* Angry beyond measure. His atrocious nature displayed itself. The wise men had escaped him, and as he supposed put him at naught; and he wreaks the vengeance of his fears and wounded pride upon the poor infants of Bethlehem. ¶ *Slew all the children.* In Greek, all the *male* children. In this general massacre, he thought to slay the infant Messiah. He went somewhat beyond the time of his probable birth, and slew all under two years. It is evident that the age of Jesus was about that, namely, a year and some weeks, at which the tradition of the Church has placed it. This horrible cruelty of Herod was in keeping with his general character. Probably a hundred or more children perished in this slaughter. ¶ *Coasts.* The parts adjacent, the neighborhood. It has no reference in this use to any sea. Bethlehem was an inland town. The original word means *borders*, or bounds. Ramah, of which mention is made, was ten miles off: if it was visited by this order, it shows that Herod made a wide sweep in his rage. These infants slain at and around Bethlehem, have ever been reckoned by Christians to be *the first martyrs* for Christ; inasmuch as they died on His account and in His stead. A festival was appointed December 28, in remembrance of them, calling them the Holy Innocents. The Church, like our Lord, loves to 'carry the lambs in her bosom.' She will have honorable mention made of even the little ones who perished for Him, who came to earth as an infant, that He might save infants. On the return of this feast, we are bidden to have in mind how God did, "out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, ordain strength, and make infants to glorify Him by their death," and to pray "that He would mortify and kill all vices in us, and so strengthen us by His grace, that by the innocency of our lives and constancy of our faith, even unto death, we may glorify His holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord." The passage chosen for the Epistle (Rev. xiv. 1–5) sets before us the preciousness of that purity of heart and mind which belongs to infants. We learn from the very fact of this celebration, the faith of the Church, that children, even the least, are capable of being made 'children of God, members of Christ, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.'

17–18. *Was fulfilled.* The words of the prophet were recalled in this scene. That weeping which his imagination so forcibly pictured in the idea of the departed Rachael, weeping for her children in their distress, received another fulfilment. For the words of Jeremiah are not cited here as a prophecy, but "then was fulfilled," only as a striking renewal of an ancient passage. See Jer. xxxi. 15. After the destruction of Jerusalem, the captives were led away in great companies to the land of Babylon. Jeremiah, with an exquisite beauty of language, gives us an idea of the weeping of this great company, by calling up the image of their ancestress weeping over her descendants. No ac-

heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping *for* her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

19 ¶ But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,

20 Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead[a] which sought the young child's life.

[a] Ex. 4. 19.

count of multitudes mourning could so emphatically express the depth of their affliction as this one image. And only in an accommodated sense, as any man recites the striking language of another, St. Matthew repeats it. He does not give the exact number of the slain, nor the various grief of the parents, but pictures the one mother wringing her hands over them. Rachel was the mother of Joseph and Benjamin. Her grave was at Bethlehem. Jeremy speaks of her shade, as if it had been seen at Ramah, weeping the loss of her children. St. Matthew is thought to imply that the slaughter of the children extended to Ramah, but this seems not very probable, as Ramah was six miles to the north of Jerusalem, on the road to Samaria. ¶ *Weeping for her children.* It is common in this day in the East for mothers to seek the graves of their children, to weep over them. It was probably the custom anciently, for in that country customs seldom change. There is great beauty in the imagination of this, the dearest wife of the ancestor of the Jews, rising from her grave to appear in the times of the affliction of her children.

19. *But when Herod was dead.* "According to S. Athanasius, who lived A. D. 326, the holy family returned from Egypt in the consulship of Silvanus, when Jesus had completed His fourth year. This consulship was in the year after Herod's death." *Dr. Jarvis.* At his death Herod left his kingdom to be divided between his three sons. Archelaus received Judea, Idumea and Samaria; Philip Herod received Batanea, Trachonitis and Gaulonitis; and Herod Antipas, the tetrarch, notorious for the murder of John the Baptist, Galilee and Perea. The name Herod was given them as a title of royalty, and the division ratified by the Romans.

20. *They are dead.* Antipater was dead as well as Herod. He was put to death by his father, for conspiring to poison him and seize the kingdom. The character of Herod is thus summed up by Josephus: "He was a man universally cruel and of an ungovernable anger; and though he trampled justice under foot he was ever the favorite of fortune. From a private station he rose to the throne. Beset on every side with a thousand dangers, he escaped them all, and prolonged his life to the full boundaries of old age. They who considered what befell him in his own family, pronounced him a man most miserable; but to himself he ever seemed most prosperous, for of all his enemies there was not one whom he did not overcome." *De Bell.* xvii. 8. Josephus found no room in detailing the greater crimes of Herod, to speak of the murder of the innocents of Bethlehem. He cruelly destroyed numbers of persons opposed to him. At the conquest of Jerusalem he put to death forty-five friends of Antigonus, whom others would have spared. He murdered the young high priest Aristobulus, and sought to elevate a man unfit for the office. His children became victims of his anger or jealousy, till the Emperor Augustus said bitterly, "It were better to be Herod's hog than his son," as his religion would withhold him from slaying the animal, but his conscience would not restrain him from his children. He loved Mariame, and destroyed her. Though a Jew, by profession, he sought to paganize the nation, till compelled by fear to abandon the plan, he tried to atone for it by rebuilding the temple. He was the victim of terrible remorse.

21 And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

22 But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee:

23 And he came and dwelt in a city called[a] Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

[a] Luke 2. 39. John 1. 45.

When near his latter end, eaten up by a loathsome disease, he sought to commit suicide. Then, to crown all, he ordered the death of one of his sons, and summoned the chief men of Judea to Jericho. They were shut up in the circus, and he besought his sister Salome and her husband, with tears in his eyes, to put them to death, as soon as he expired, *that the Jews might have reason to mourn for him.* Such was the monster who planned the death of the infant Jesus. Yet St. Matthew says not a word to brand him, for his purpose was not to give the life of Herod, but of Jesus. The angels, in communicating his end, say only, *They are dead.* This silence should teach us pity of the wicked, who are the most miserable often when they seem the most prosperous.

22. *He heard that Archelaus did reign.* He was son of Herod by Maltace, and of a disposition similar to his father's. He began his reign with a deed of cruelty, slaying three thousand Jews, at one time, in the temple. He was at last banished by the Roman Emperor to Nicene in Gaul, to satisfy the Jews. He was the last of the kings. The nation was then reduced to a Roman province. Joseph had great reason to fear such a man; but it was the design of Providence, by causes apparently natural, to bring the Saviour into notice first, as a native of Galilee, then the most ignoble part of Palestine. Joseph intended to dwell in Bethlehem, but was overruled. ¶ *He was afraid.* The angel bade him to go into the land of Israel. He hesitated about returning to his own city until warned to do so. We see in this the piety of Joseph, who was fain to return to Bethlehem, supposing that the son of David should appear first from that town. ¶ *Parts of Galilee.* The northern section of the Holy Land was called Galilee. It was separated from Judea by Samaria. Formerly occupied by the tribes of Zebulon, Naphtali and Asher, it became the possession after the captivity, of a mixed population. Josephus described it as very populous, containing two hundred and four towns and cities. The people were brave, warlike, and resolute lovers of liberty—strongly impressed with the belief that they ought to serve God alone as their king. Our Lord was surnamed the Galilean, from his youth being passed there.

23. *Nazareth.* It was a small village of Galilee, west of Mount Tabor, about fifty-six miles north of Jerusalem. It was built partly in a valley, partly on the declivity of a hill. Lu. iv. 29. A village called *Nassara* is still to be found there, in which is a convent, said to be built on the spot of the Annunciation, and two churches. The monks, who seem pious and credulous men, point the traveller to the very house where Jesus spent his early life in subjection to his parents. Bp. Wainwright thus speaks of it:—"Nazareth reposes in the bosom of a beautiful valley, abounding in rich pastures, groves of fig-trees, and gardens hedged with the prickly pear, surrounded by picturesque but barren mountains. 'It seems,' says a graphic writer, "as if fifteen mountains met to form an enclosure for this delightful spot: they rise around it like the edge of a shell, to guard it from intrusion.' The village stands on the side of a hill that bounds the valley on the west, and contains a mingled population of Greeks and Roman Catholics, Maronites and Mahommedans. The convent is upon a rocky eminence, rising directly from the valley, upon the

CHAPTER III.

IN those days[a] came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea,

a Mark 1. 4. Lu. 3. 2. John 1. 28.

2 And saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias,[b] saying,

b Isaiah 40. 3.

eastern border of the village. It is a substantial building of massive stone, enclosed in high walls. Within, there is the church built upon the place where the house of Joseph and Mary is supposed to have stood." Bp. Wainwright was sick at the convent, and was attended by a pious and skilful monk, of whom he says: "So he administers to the Arabs of the desert; and the convent itself is the centre of charities untold. Truly *wonders of love* have sprung from the Godlike benevolence of the carpenter's son of Nazareth!"

23. *By the prophets.* Not by any single prophet, but by them as a whole. The *words* are not found in any of the ancient prophecies. Some would refer them to Judges xiii. 5. There Samson is called a Nazarite. But a Nazarite and a Nazarene are two entirely different names, of things as different. A Nazarite was a man *honored* by the Jews; a Nazarene is here used as a mark of contempt. Others deduce a meaning from Isaiah xi. 1, from the word Branch—in Hebrew, *Netzer*. But the interpretation is stretched and unworthy. Did Jesus dwell in this town simply to call attention to the similarity of *sound* between the words Netzer and Nazarene? And St. Matthew says, by the *prophets*, not by one of them. We read, too, that the word Nazarene was not given to Jesus in honor of the Branch, but as a sneer, to show the doubt of His claims of being such. It follows, therefore, that the writer refers, as most commentators have shown, to that large class of prophecies which foretold that the Messiah should be a man despised and rejected. See Is. liii. 2, 3. Ps. xxii. 7. Zech. xi. 12, 13. The inhabitants of the towns of Galilee were despised by the Jews. Nathanael showed the prevalent feeling. John i. 46. See Matt. xxvi. 69, 73. To be a Nazarene was therefore to be a person of no repute, despised and rejected. The Messiah, least of all, was to be sought for in that province, as the Pharisees sneeringly told Nicodemus: "Search and look: *for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.*" John vii. 52. St. Matthew manifests his own truthfulness in giving these particulars. For the brand which was put on the early Christians was the name of Nazarenes Acts xxiv. 5. He takes it freely, and showing the order of events, how it came about, refers to the prophets, whose words described the reproach which would be cast upon the Messiah. He seems to show the spirit manifested by St. Paul on another occasion: "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ." Gal. vi. 14. Heb. xiii. 13. St. Augustine remarks: "The whole of this history, from the account of the Magi inclusively, St. Luke omits. Let it here be noticed, once for all, that each of the Evangelists writes as if he were giving a full and complete history, which omits nothing; when he really passes over anything, he continues his thread of history as if he had told all. Yet, by a diligent comparison of the several narratives, we can be at no loss to know where to insert any particular that is mentioned by one and not by the other."

CHAPTER III.

1. *In those days.* Twenty-six years had passed. Those days, therefore, refer to that period in general, the days of the life and ministry of Jesus. St. Luke makes mention of Jesus at twelve years of age. Lu. ii. 42, &c., and passes on, as St. Matthew and the others do, to the *ministry of Christ.* For this was especially the Gospel—the revelation of the will of God in the evangelical covenant. The date of the event recorded in this chapter is given by St. Luke iii. 1. It is thought that St. John began his work on the *great day of atonement*, the 10th of the month Tisri, answering to our month Sep-

tember 29th. See Lev. xvi. 10; Deut. xvi. 16. On the day that the high-priest entered the most holy place, to offer atonement for the sins of the nation, he began to preach of that great atonement of our High-Priest, the Lord Jesus. After the feast of Tabernacles, Oct. 4th to 11th, the Jews were free to leave the city, and came to him in multitudes to be baptized by him. ¶ *John the Baptist.* That is, the Baptizer. See Luke i. He was the last of the Jewish prophets. Like them rude, abrupt in speech, simple, severe in his manner of life and dress, bringing with him the unmistakable signs of his office, the "greatest" in power and privilege of all before him. Lu. vii. 28. He was six months older than Jesus, and related to Him. He knew Him of course as a cousin, but not at first as the Messiah. His chief duty was *to preach the baptism of repentance and remission of sin*, as a preparation for the coming of the Messiah. Baptism is said to have been practised by the Jews, as a mode of receiving proselytes into their church. It was expressive with them, of the cleansing from the defilement of heathenism, and a general purification to fit persons to appear before the Lord. John, in adopting this custom, does not stop to explain it, except as a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Lu. iii. 3. His disciples confessed their sins and expressed a resolution of amendment of life. v. 6. It was distinguished from Christian baptism by John himself. v. 11. It was temporary, to last only for a season, and was to be repeated after the Holy Ghost came. Acts xviii. 25; xix. 1–7. Our Lord makes the distinction between the two rites. Acts i. 5. ¶ *Preaching.* Crying aloud as a herald or public crier. He came to announce Christ; to warn the people of His coming. He warned all that the Lord was near, and instructed them in the righteousness which they should have, to be ready to meet Him. His style was simple. He did not anticipate the Gospel doctrines, but only gave utterance to that same exhortation made by all the prophets—to live soberly, righteously and godly. So should "the ministers and stewards of the divine mysteries seek to prepare and make ready the way of the Lord, now by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, so that at Christ's second coming we may be found an acceptable people in His sight." *Collect* 3d *Sun. in Adv.* The Church has set apart June 24th in honor of this holy man, and holds up his example to us, that, like him, we may constantly speak the truth boldly rebuke vice, and patiently suffer for the truth's sake. ¶ *Wilderness of Judea.* A wild place with few or no inhabitants. The valley of the Jordan, from Jericho southward, was mostly uninhabited, occupied mostly by wild beasts and wandering tribes. See v. 5. John lived apart, an ascetic life, as Elijah had done before him, in order to manifest a disregard of the vanities of life. Ch. xi. 18. He called men from their homes into a wild region, because it was necessary to rouse them to a work of preparation. To do this now, as some enthusiasts would attempt, is to act without warrant, to interfere with the due order of Christian society, and promote enthusiasm and folly. We live under a different dispensation from St. John.

2. *Repent ye.* The repentance which was here meant, was a determination to forsake the vices and sins of their past lives and to do good works, meet, i. e., worthy of a resolution of repentance. It was prompted by a fear of Jehovah, a sense of the guilt of offending Him, and a desire to receive a share in the blessings of the Messianic kingdom. It differed from Christian repentance, according as the Jewish expectation of a temporal kingdom differed from the hope of a spiritual sanctification in the soul and the future rewards of heaven. The Greek word implies a change of mind and life. The Prayer Book sets forth the elements of Repentance. "The way and means whereto, is 1st, to examine your lives and consciences by the rule of God's commandments, and wherein soever ye shall perceive yourselves to have offended, either by will, word or deed, then to bewail your own sinfulness, and to confess yourselves to Almighty God, with full purpose of amendment of life." It adds the duty

The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

of restitution to others, and forgiving them their offences. He who does this perseveringly, knows in himself what repentance is. See Ps. li. 10, 11; Luke vii. 37–47; xix. 8; xxiii. 40–43. ¶ *The kingdom of heaven.* The time has come that the kingdom spoken of by the prophets shall be set up—the king of it is about to appear. The Greek reads, the kingdom of the heavens, in the plural, probably a Hebraism for the *heavenly kingdom.* It is elsewhere called the kingdom of God, of His dear Son, of Christ, &c. The Old Testament has very numerous predictions of a kingdom to be set up in the last times, by the Messiah on the earth, over which He was to rule forever. Dan. vii. 13, 14. The Jews misunderstood the spirit of these prophecies, and instead of a kingdom of grace, they imagined a temporal reign of Christ, a glorious conquest of the whole earth to be achieved by war, an universal realm in which they were to be kings and priests over the Gentiles. It was a fascinating delusion. Images of the greatest beauty and happiness which the imagination can conceive, are found in the prophetic writings on this subject. As troubles gathered over the Jews, these images grew brighter. Universal plenty, unfailing health, prosperity and peace, no troubles at home, no fears abroad, all noxious animals despoiled of their wildness and venom, disease, weeping, death unknown, all that poetry can discover to paint a temporal Paradise, had been used of this Messianic reign. See Is. ix. For all can but feebly portray the joy which peace with God can give. The Jews did not reflect on other portions of their Scriptures, that true joy was to be found in another kind of conquest, that a kingdom must be set up in the soul, in order to secure its happiness. This delusive vision of a temporal kingdom had taken such hold of the Jewish mind, that even the disciples could not give it up, till illuminated by the Holy Ghost. Acts i. 6. If we do not keep in mind this fact, we shall fail to understand many things which are recorded in the Gospels. We now know that the Messianic kingdom is heavenly and spiritual. It is the new covenant, the Holy Catholic Church, the spiritual reign of Christ begun in the Church on earth, completed in heaven. In the Gospels it is called a kingdom, because the king was the main idea, Who demanded obedience of His chosen people. In the epistles it is called not only kingdom, but the Church, i. e. the Lord's possession, because He has bought and united His people to Himself. See Matt. xvi. 18; Acts ii. 47; Eph. i. 22; iii. 10; v. 25–29. This kingdom embraces Christ the King, the Head over all, and His Body the Church, or all who are united to Him, 1, by the rites of initiation and fellowship; 2, all who are united to Him by spiritual obedience and growth in grace; 3, those who are in His holy keeping, in the world of departed spirits. The visible Church here contains good and bad members; the Church in the other life only will contain those who have been faithful to the end. John the Baptist doubtless had only confused notions of the spiritual covenant, for Jesus warned him not to be offended at His want of temporal greatness. Ch. xi. 6. But he saw its shadowy outlines, and taught by inspiration the duties which would have made men apt to receive it.

3. *Esaias.* Isaiah. See Is. xl. 3. The words are quoted from the Septuagint Greek, with a trifling difference. ¶ *The voice of one,* etc. This had been said in the first place of the Jews returning from Babylon, and is applicable to John only as the one fulfilling the former typical event. When St. Matthew says, *This is he of whom,* etc., he is to be understood as saying, "Now that the return from captivity has begun under Christ, of whom all the Old Testament and the Jewish history were typical, this John is exactly described by the words of Isaiah." If any cavil is made, it is sufficient to know that both Jews and early

4 And the same John had his [a] raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

5 Then went out to him Jeru-

[a] 2 Kings 1. 8. Matt. 11. 8.

Christians understood the language of the ancient prophecies according to this rule. The words of Isaiah give us the picture of a herald or pioneer going before an army to announce the approach of a king, and command every one to prepare the roads, remove rocks, level obstructions, and cast up a highway, so that he and his army may travel easily. Such were the customs of the East. Isaiah foretells to his countrymen a future return in this royal manner from Babylon, under the providential guidance of their king, Jehovah. All impediments should be removed, and they should be brought back. Now, if we look to the fulfilment: the Jews did return, but by no means in a royal or triumphant manner. The words therefore pass beyond this event to some other future one, which we find to be this coming of the Messiah; and in this fulfilment John is the herald spoken of by the prophet. He cried out to all that their King came, bade them prepare in their hearts the royal highway, that they might make Him welcome. He was a *voice* only to prepare the way for the *Word of God*. The spiritual covenant was only shadowed out in his preaching. He was in the wilderness, to announce in a startling manner the coming of Him whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting.

4. *The same John.* He imitated the other prophets by a life of poverty, seclusion, and asceticism. Elijah, the type of John, "was a hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather," i. e. he was clothed in the skins of beasts, such as could be obtained in the wilderness. See 2 Kings 1, 8. Zech. xiii. 4. This garment of John's was not of fine camel's hair, such as we are accustomed to see in camlet cloth, but either the hide of the animal with the hair upon it, or else a very coarse cloth made from it, and now called sackcloth. Chaudin, the traveller, states that such garments are worn now in the East by *dervishes*, i. e. false prophets of the Mohammedans. This clothing marked the poverty which John had adopted as the servant of God. ¶ *His meat.* His food. Locusts of some sort could be eaten by the Jews. Lev. xi. 22. Bochart mentions ten species of them, which were 'clean meat,' that is, not forbidden by the Mosaic ritual. They were insects about two or three inches in length, shaped like grasshoppers, appearing at times in immense numbers, like black clouds, and devastating large tracts of country. They were one of the plagues of Egypt. Ex. x. 12–16. See Joel i. 4. Is xxxiii. 4. Though small, they are a great terror to the Orientals, and give a fearful point to the wrathful denunciations of Joel (ii. 2–11) and St. John (Rev. ix. 3–12). They were eaten, and are still, by the dervishes and poor of the East. ¶ *Wild honey.* This was abundant in Palestine. Moses speaks of the people "as sucking honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock," and the land "as flowing with milk and honey." Deut. xxxii. 13. Ex. iii. 8. There seems to be two kinds still found in this country: the bee-honey, which is deposited in holes in the rocks and holes in trees, in great abundance. The inhabitants mix it with their food of all kinds. Also a sweet vegetable liquid is found in the valley of the Jordan, called Beyrouk honey. Burckhardt says that it was described to him as flowing from the leaves of a tree found there, as sweet as fruit, but becoming sour after two days. The Arabs eat it with butter. It is enough that there was enough food of these kinds to be found by John in his wanderings to sustain life. He came not "eating and drinking," as other men. Matt. xi. 18. His mode of life called attention to him, his spiritual elevation compelled men to think, and his simple truth and fervor, aided by the inspiration of his divine message, persuaded many to enter on the formal preparation, some in the sin-

salem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan,

6 And were baptized[b] of him in Jordan,[a] confessing their sins.

a Acts 1. 5; 2. 38; 19. 4, 5. *b* Ezra 9; Neh. 9; Dan. 9; Lev. 16. 21.

cere, penitent expectation of the Messiah, whose way he thus made ready.

5. *Jerusalem.* The whole city was moved. All went forth. If it was the season of Feast of Tabernacles, the city was filled with devout Jews, who may be intended by *all Judea.* Judea, formerly the possession of Benjamin and Judah, lay to the south of Palestine. It was occupied by Jews until the destruction of the city. ¶ *Jordan.* This famous river flows from north to south through the holy land. Rising in the mountains of Lebanon to the north, it first flows thirteen miles under ground, as far as Cæsarea Philippi, when it finds the light again, in a scene of great beauty. It flows into the lake of Merom (now called El-Hâleh) a spot celebrated in the history of the Israelites. Josh. xi. 5, 7. Ten miles further south the Jordan enters and flows through the Sea of Galilee, which is about twelve miles long and six wide. The current of the river is perceptible through the whole length of the lake. Thence it flows by a serpentine course to the Dead Sea, which is about sixty miles in a direct line, though the river by its meanderings reaches the length of two hundred miles. Lieut. Lynch, U. S. N., was the first to survey the course of this stream, and describes it as a rapid, dangerous river. His party passed over twenty-seven rapids, some very perilous. Towards the end of its winding course it becomes more navigable. The valley of this river is one of the most remarkable spots of the world. It is called El-Ghor, i. e. the depressed plain, and is from 650 to 1,300 feet *below* the level of the ocean, and removed by this circumstance from all connection with it. The river flows into the sultry cauldron of the Dead Sea, and is evaporated by the heat of the sun, and sent out again in clouds to water or be wasted on the surrounding deserts. The Jordan has in many places two distinct banks on each side, two confining its ordinary current, and two reached by it, in its annual inundations. See Josh. iii. 15. 1 Chron. xii. 15. The higher level is overgrown with weeds and rushes, in which the wild beasts take refuge, till driven out by the "swellings" of the stream. See Jer. xlix. 19. High precipitous hills, bare of vegetation and rocky, rise on both sides of the valley, giving room at intervals to little valleys of the richest, most picturesque verdure and beauty. In one of these, at Bethabara, near Jericho, John fixed the scene of his baptism. He baptized at first "beyond Jordan," on the east side, at Bethabara, at the very spot, as it is supposed, where the Israelites crossed the river under Joshua; afterwards he retired to Enon or Saleim, on the western side. The Jordan has been the scene of some of the most important events of sacred history. It was divided by a miracle for the passage of the Israelites. Josh. iii. & iv. There they were typically baptized in it, as St. Paul reasons of the same event in a similar case. See 1 Cor. x. 2. The Christian feels the force of this analogy, as is shown in the Hymn 199 of the Prayer Book. Elijah again divided its waters for his passage to a better land. Kings ii. 8. Naaman was cleansed from the leprosy by dipping seven times in it. 2 Kings v. 14. Our Saviour was baptized beneath its waves, thus "sanctifying the element of water to the mystical washing away of sin." *Prayer Book.* These events prefigured the spiritual significations of baptism, as a rite of admission into the Church, the better Canaan; as a means of washing off by the Spirit the otherwise incurable leprosy of sin, and as a sign and sacrament, uniting us to the Lord Jesus, and "generally necessary to salvation." The Fathers considered St. John's baptism as a forerunner only of the Christian, to be only a shadowy outline of

7 ¶ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees

the latter, which began in its fulness on the day of Pentecost.

6. *Were baptized.* The force of the word *baptize*, which is now so hotly debated, seems to have been simply *to wash*, whether by plunging a thing into water, or by water poured upon it. The former mode of ablution, that is, by immersing a person under the water, "burying him in baptism" (Col. ii. 12), and lifting him again out of it, was without any question the ancient custom, was doubtless the manner in which Jesus was baptized by John. St. Paul, therefore, speaks of our baptism as representing the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, and as grounded upon that representation, our "being dead unto sin," "buried with Him by baptism unto death" (Ro. vi. 4), renouncing sin and being acquitted of it, by rising again 'to walk in newness of life.' The other mode of washing by emblematic pouring or sprinkling sufficiently symbolizes the same effects, and represents in a more striking manner "the sacrificial sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. i. 19; Heb. x. 22), which cleanseth from all sin, and must necessarily have been used in the first ages of the Church, though less frequently, as, for instance, when so many thousands were baptized in one day (Acts ii. 41), when the family of the jailer were baptized in the prison (Acts xvi. 33), and in the case of all sick persons and delicate infants. We are left at liberty as to the mode we shall practise; because were there more to be said for immersion than there is, "God will have mercy and not sacrifice." Hos. vi. 6; Matt. ix. 13, xii. 7. Washings were common among the Jews, to express a moral or ceremonial cleansing. Heb. ix. 10; Mark vii. 4; Numb. xix. 7. The Episcopal church, in her reverence for the spiritual truth, supposes either *form* of baptism to be good and valid, as is shown in the rubrics of the office of baptism. It speaks thus: "And from thence to the prayer immediately before the *immersion or the pouring of water on the infant.*" Again, "And then naming it after them, the minister shall *dip it (the child) in the water, or shall pour water upon it,*" &c. "Either of these modes is sufficient; for it is not in this spiritual washing as it is in the bodily washing, where, if the bath be not large enough, some parts may be foul when the rest are cleansed. The soul is cleansed after another manner, a little water can cleanse the believer as well as a whole river."—*Bp. Sparrow.* The Church feels no difficulty in allowing an indifference in the mode of administering the rite, and the quantity of water used in it. She only requires for regular baptism that it be duly administered in two respects: 1. That the sacred names of the Trinity be used in the prescribed manner, with water. 2. That it be done by a lawful minister, properly ordained, and in the regular discharge of his office. ¶ *Confessing their sins.* This was strictly commanded in the law of Moses. See Lev. v. 5, xvi. 21, xxvi. 40; Ps. xxxii. 5. John, as a Jewish prophet, taught this confession according to his law. St. Peter calls it "the answer of a good conscience toward God," and opposes it to the outward form. See 1 Pet. iii. 21. It contains *repentance of sin* and due *confession* thereof; *faith* that God has provided forgiveness of all sin; *obedience* to the requirements of this appointed way of pardon; a heart moved with *charity* to the Giver of all good, and the *sincere proposition* of mind to do all good works as opportunity may be given. These were doubtless required by St. John; they are required by the Lord Jesus now. In the former case, the corresponding blessing was "forgiveness of sins," to prepare for the Messiah. Luke iii. 3. In the latter there are added "the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts ii. 38), and the promise of eternal salvation. 1 Pet. iii. 21. John foretold this higher gift of the Messiah, v. 11. Thus he made ready, in a moral sense, in the desert of a sinful nation, a highway for the Lord. So must we, according to the Christian covenant, make our hearts ready for His ap-

come to his baptism, he said unto them,[a] O generation of vipers,

a Matt. 12. 34; Gen. 3. 1; Rev. 12. 9.

who hath warned you to flee from the[b] wrath to come?

b Nah. 1, 2; Job 21. 20; Dan. 12. 2; Is. 13 6. 11.

proach, by repentance, confession, and forsaking of all sin.

7. *Pharisees.* The Jews were divided at the time of Christ into the two rival sects of Pharisees and Sadducees, the former strictly holding to the law of Moses, the latter inclined to a more liberal interpretation, and to laxer morals; the former strict religionists, the latter more worldly and philosophic; both sadly departed from the truth and purity of the Mosaic spirit. We hear of a third sect, the *Essenes*, but they were of smaller number, lonely habits, and exercised no influence upon their countrymen or the disciples of Christ. Hence we find no mention of them in the Gospels. Of the two principal sects, the Pharisees are oftenest mentioned, as most bitterly opposed to Christ, so that we must know something of them, in order to understand the records of His life. They are mentioned by the Jewish historian, Josephus, as in high repute in the time of Hyrcanus, 130, B. C. See Jos. Ant. xiii. 10, 5, 6. Their name signified *Separatists, the pure*, by a proud claim of superior sanctity, moral and ceremonial. They believed in a system of traditionary explanations of the law of Moses, of which they were the special guardians, by which while pretending the greatest reverence for the law, they often subverted and corrupted it. Matt. xv. 6. Their tradition they pretended to have come down with the same authority as the written word. They believed in *fate*, much as the heathen Stoics did (see note ch. xviii. 11), yet did not entirely reject the notion of a free will. In opposition to the Sadducees, they believed in the existence of spirits and souls, though with some erroneous notions (see Jos. Bel. Jud. ii. 8, 14), and in the resurrection of the body. Their religious practices or morals come before us most frequently. They professed great strictness of life, and skilfully veiled all their faults under a merely external piety, whereby they gained as their reward, the greatest influence over their countrymen. They were guileful and hypocritic, on account of which, St. John here, and our Lord in ch. xxiii. 33, calls them *vipers*. They were scrupulous for certain rites, the washings of the body, their clothes, cups, tables, &c., fastings, long prayers in public, alms, tithes, and their phylacteries, i. e. certain badges on their dress, which distinguished them from the rest of men. Their religion was a showy outside, to be seen of men, and it was, in their hands, an instrument of fearful power. They gained by it wealth, influence and power, and as a consequence became factious, intolerant and corrupt. There were some good men in their ranks, for instance, Simeon, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus; but the great body of the sect was worldly, corrupt, haughty, and ignorant of the spirit of the law which they professed, deceitful in their dealings with men, and hostile to the religion of Christ. They effected the death of Jesus, and are ranked by Christians as the worst of men. We should study their characters, in order to avoid foolish prejudice against them, and especially to escape their errors. They degenerated from the model of a pious Jew, as drawn by Moses and David. What shall we be, if we neglect the sublimer and purer example of piety which is set before us? ¶ *Sadducees.* Little is known of these men. The name was either derived from the Hebrew word *Tsadah*, meaning *to be just*, or from one Sadok, who lived about 300 B. C. They denied the existence of spirits and souls, hence, also, the resurrection of men. They erred also concerning the providence of God. They held to the writings of Moses, by rejecting traditions, and were accused of rejecting all the other inspired writings. They were wealthy men, worldly, easy, selfish, with no belief of a future life, nor fear

8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance :‖

‖ or, *answerable to amendment of life.*

of a future judgment. Opposed to the Pharisees in most of their opinions, they paid to the law a careful heed, so far as to avoid all scandal and inconvenience. They lived for this world only. They sometimes were led by their more zealous enemies to join in the war against our Lord, but with far less interest in it than the Pharisees. The Pharisees were superstitious ; they were skeptical. The former sought from religion a means of power over the consciences of men, the latter compromised with it, for the quieting of their own. Well might John express his wonder, that such men had been startled, the one from their pride, the other from their indifference, to come out and listen to a rude preacher of righteousness. ¶ *O generation of vipers.* Children of serpents, malicious, cunning and dangerous men. Says an old writer : " Vipers have a beautiful and speckled outside, but are filled with poison within. So these men's countenances wore a holy appearance, but their deeds were evil." The viper is common in Palestine, about five feet in length, yellowish, speckled with oblong brown spots, and of deadly venom. The serpent, in all its forms, is a type of that evil spirit which first appeared in it, to ruin man, and bring death upon the race of Adam. St. John uses these words to remove the veil which had concealed from the eyes of these men their malice and hypocrisy, in coming to hear him. Truth is gentle to the penitent, but in mercy is stern in rebuking the boldness of sinners. ¶ *Who hath warned you ?* You pride yourselves on your intimate acquaintance with the law and the prophets. Which of them has warned you to come to me ? Which of them has broken the ice of your pride and unbelief ? Has any one of them sent you hither with the worldly motives which now actuate you ? The Pharisees sent out a commission to examine the claims of John to being a prophet,

9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham

John i. 19-24. This question was recorded by St. Matthew, probably, as a result or index of the meetings of John and these great men of Jerusalem. ¶ *Wrath to come.* That future punishment of the wicked in which the Jews believed. Dan. xii. 2. The knowledge which we now have of future punishment is far more definite and certain than any which existed before the gospel. The word Hell has a different meaning in the two Testaments. See note, chap. v. 22. God's wrath against the wicked was a tenet of the Pharisees and denied by the Sadducees. Hence, John wonders what motive could have joined them together, in seeking him, who feared not to tell them they deserved it, and would find it, if they failed to repent.

8. *Meet for repentance.* Such evidences of a thorough repentance as may prove you to be changed, in heart and soul, from your former error and pride. Repentance consists of two parts—the secret, a sorrow for sin and a resolution to lead a new life ; and the outward and visible forsaking of sin, reparation for all past injuries, and humble confession of such resolution and change to proper persons. These are *fruits*, or results of a genuine sorrow for sin as against the mercy and love of God ; and as the tree has its inner secret sap, by which it puts forth leaves and flowers, but may not put out good and ripe fruit, so these outer professions, unless attended with good works, are only as the leaves of a corrupt and useless tree. The life must answer in holy works and graces to the inner repentance, to show that it is unto godliness and salvation. The Pharisees had been very wicked—they were to repent thoroughly, nor hope to deceive John with a wily show of regard.

9. *Abraham to our father.* We are Jews, and descendants of him " in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed," therefore, we are, of

to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

10 And now also the axe is laid [a]unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.[b]

11 I indeed baptize [c]you with

[a] Lu. 13. 7. [b] John 15. 6; Heb. 6. 7, 8. [c] Acts 11. 16; 19. 4.

course, safe before God, and of some importance to His prophet. The Jews took great pride in their descent from Abraham, and leaned on the promises made to him as certain evidences of the favor of God. Psa. cv. 8, 9. The Epistle to the Romans was written to break down this notion in the minds of Jewish Christians. See Rom. iv. ix. 8. John begins the war upon this false notion by assuring them that God would sooner make men out of the stones lying around them, than give the blessings of His grace to men whose hearts were evil and harder than stones. ¶ *These stones.* It is possible that John may have pointed to the stones which marked the ancient crossing of the Israelites, and so to that miraculous power of God which had worked against the laws of nature in reversing the current of a rapid river, but never against the eternal laws of justice by rewarding the wicked.

10. *The axe is laid to the root of the trees.* For years trees grow, for good or ill, but at last the axe is laid ready to cleave them, or to cut down at least the useless and noxious ones. This representation was most expressive of the great change which was about to come upon the men of Judah, "the Lord's pleasant plant." *The Theocracy was about to end.* Their law, covenant, national pre-eminence, were all to cease with the new kingdom of Christ. Hitherto the Lord had winked at many evils. Sects had struggled, sins had passed unvisited, sinners had grown gray in prosperity, for the state was imperfect, the revelation incomplete. But now the full light was to come—the entire plan of salvation to be made known, and sudden vengeance to visit those of the nation who refused to listen to their Messiah.

11. *Baptize you.* See note v. 6. St. John here, 1. Contrasts his mission and baptism with those of Christ. 2. Foretells the Christian rite. His own rite was with water, without an inward spiritual gift. It was to repentance, and it sealed for a definite purpose the "forgiveness of sin." It said nothing of the gift of the Holy Ghost; his disciples knew nothing of it (Acts xix. 2), because *it was not yet given.* John vii. 39. John's baptism ceased as a rite, and in its effects. It was always repeated by the Christians. On the other hand, the Christian baptism was with the Holy Ghost, in the "new birth" of water and the Spirit (John iii. 5), was made perpetual, universal, and necessary to salvation. Mark xvi. 16; Matt. xxviii. 19. See, on this important rite, the following passages: Eph. iv. 5; Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12; 1. Pet. iii. 21; Acts ii. 38, xxii. 16; 1 Cor. xii. 13; Gal. iii. 27; Tit. iii. 5. The catechism sums up the nature of baptism: 1. Water and the appointed form of words. 2. "A death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness; for being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are *hereby* made the children of grace." In baptism the child is made "a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." And this is true, inasmuch as it is a covenant between God and the soul, and 'represents *unto us our profession,* which is to follow Christ and to be made like unto Him; that as He died and rose again for us, so should *we die from sin and rise again unto righteousness,* continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness.' Thus, on the one hand, we receive the everlasting benediction of the heavenly washing, in answer to faithful prayer, since Christ keeps faithfully His part of the covenant. On the other, we must come to it

water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire:

12 Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge[a] his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the [b]chaff with unquenchable fire.

a Mal. 3. 2, 3. *b* Mal. 4. 1; Ps. 1. 4.

with faith, repentance, and resolution of amendment, and continue the rest of our lives according to this beginning. Thus, born again, and rooted and grounded in faith, hope and charity, we may pass safely to the haven of final peace. See ch. xix. 14, additional note ch. xix. 30. ¶ *Holy Ghost.* With the influences or gifts of the Holy Spirit, that third Person of the Trinity, who is revealed in the Christian Scriptures in his powers, in the Church by His graces. See note, John xvi. 7. Our Saviour did not baptize with water. After His ascent He baptized His disciples with fire. See Acts i. 5, ii. 2-4. ¶ *With fire.* This was exactly fulfilled in the inauguration of the Church (Acts ii.), by a visible descent of the Holy Spirit from Christ. Eph. iv. 8. The Spirit is likened to fire, as it is a warmth and vital breath received from heaven—warms us—guides, purifies and sanctifies the soul. Mal. iii. 2; 1 Pet. i. 7; 1 Thess. v. 19. All graces of the Christian are fruits of the Spirit, which works in him to will and to do according to the divine will. ¶ *Shoes.* Sandals, consisting of pieces of wood or leather under the foot, and thongs of leather passing over the instep to hold it. It was the office of servants only to remove these on the return of their masters. John declares his idea of that Messiah who was to come, and his own unworthiness when compared with Him.

12. *Whose fan.* A sort of sieve or shovel, of a rude shape, used by the Jews. Their grain was separated from the chaff by the feet of cattle. The mass left in the threshing-floor was no unfit emblem of the Jewish nation. This was then thrown up against the wind by shovels; the chaff and dirt were blown away, leaving behind the wheat. The floors or areas used for this purpose were often on hill tops, open to the wind. Mount Moriah was so used by Araunah the Jebusite. 2 Sam. xxiv. 16-23. It was sold by him to king David. Araunah offered to give the king "the oxen for burnt sacrifice, and the threshing instruments and other instruments of the oxen, for wood." These instruments were probably the heavy cars or wheels used in breaking and bruising the chaff. Our Lord takes up the mass—bad and good mingled together, and exposes it to the sun and air, separating the wheat from the refuse portion. The wheat is gathered into the garner, and the chaff burned in the fire. These terms are taken from agricultural life, and are of value to teach us the truths of religion. ¶ *Will thoroughly purge his floor.* The Messiah would purify His people; take away from them all the wicked men who oppressed them, and lead them to clearer knowledge of the Lord. St. John's language is remarkable for this circumstance. It is derived from the Old Testament, and exactly describes the mind of one who looked for a king to restore the Jews to purity and glory as a people, while it is conceived in that spiritual clearness which makes it fit for the mouth of the most intelligent Christian. Our Lord now purifies His Church by removing wickedness from it—purifies the "ground of the heart" by renewing it in holiness, and will finish all in the grand purifying of the holy Church in the last day. ¶ *Unquenchable fire.* In eternal punishment which is prepared for the wicked.

14. *To be baptized of Him.* We suppose this to have happened January 6. Epiphany, A. D. 25. True era 31. It begins the *ministry of Christ.* He was now about 30 years of age. Lu. iii. 23.

13 ¶ Then cometh Jesus from Gallilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized[a] of him.

14 But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

a Mark 1. 9; Lu. 3. 21.

He had resided in Nazareth since His return from Egypt, in obedience to His parents, and working at the trade of a carpenter. Ch. xiii. 55. He went thrice in each year to Jerusalem, to appear before the Lord. Jesus delayed entering on His public work until the age at which a priest entered on his active duties. Num. iv. John preceded the Messiah. 1. To prepare the way for Him, by forming a link between Him and the prophets. John was acknowledged to be a prophet by the whole nation of the Jews. He, the last of the line, points out as a witness sent from God, that the former prophecies centered in Jesus. 2. To excite the nation to an instant expectation of their King, so that he might honor Jesus in a public and unmistakable manner. 3. To anoint Him, not with oil, but in the rite of Baptism, the vehicle in His case of a wonderful manifestation of the divine choice of Jesus. Thus pious and learned Jews, who were expecting their King, would recognize the claims of Jesus of Nazareth.

14. *John forbade Him.* John the Baptist twice said (see John i. 31, 33) that he did "not know Him"—that is, did not at first know who would prove to be the Messiah, but that God had given him a sign, by which he would know Him in the act of baptizing Him. Why then does John now say this, when as yet he did not know his kinsman (the son of his mother's cousin) to be the Christ. 1. This expression of humility may be a testimony of John to the blameless, holy life of Jesus. John had dwelt in the desert, but probably often met with Jesus, and probably had heard of His miraculous conception. He knew His blameless life, and was amazed to see Him too, coming to be baptized for the remission of sins. He confessed himself unworthy to baptize one, who, as he knew, had done no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. 1 Pet. ii. 22; Heb. iv. 15. 2. Or John regarding Jesus as a prophet, may have been inspired to utter these words, though as yet not altogether certain of the fact, as one surprised that the Christ whom he was expecting to appear in some great way, with lofty state, of powerful parentage, should suddenly come to him, as his well-known kinsman and companion. John, however, was fully certified by the miracle that followed. He confessed in advance his inferiority, a confession, all things considered, honorable to his own singleness and humility of mind.

15. *To fulfil all righteousness.* To obey the will of God. You are his prophet. I render you this honor. It is according to the purpose of My mission that I should be subject to all the conditions in which My disciples are to be placed. Jesus acted in all things as a man pure and perfect according to that state of life in which it had pleased God to call Him. He obeyed the whole law, attended the feasts in the city three times each year, offered sacrifices, here pays reverence to a prophet of God performing his office. The Apostolical Constitutions, a very ancient writing, has this passage: "Christ was baptized, not that He needed any purgation, but that He might testify the truth of John's baptism, and *be an example to us.*" And the Prayer Book speaks thus: "Almighty and everlasting God, who—by the baptism of Thy well-beloved Son in the river Jordan, didst sanctify the element of water to the mystical washing away of sin," &c. Says an ancient writer: "It was to give *an example of perfect justification in baptism,* without which the gate of

16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the[a] Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

17 And lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well[b] pleased.

a Is. 11. 2; 42. 1; John 3. 34.

b Matt. 17. 5; Ps. 2. 7.

heaven is not opened." Jesus fulfilled all righteousness: 1. That He should be in every thing a righteous man, a perfect model of what His servants must be. As all Christians are to be baptized (John iii. 5), He was the first to submit to it. 2. In his baptism were shown *in visible signs*, that which happens *invisibly, to faith* in their baptisms. In baptism sin is forgiven. Acts ii. 38; xxii. 16. He knew no sin, yet receives the form. It regenerates by the Holy Spirit. Tit. iii. 5. The sign of the Spirit, a dove was seen to descend on Him. In it we are adopted into the covenant as sons of God. Rom. vi. 4; Col. ii. 12. A voice proclaiming the adoption of Jesus was heard then. Hence this fulfilling all righteousness assures us of that invisible work which goes on in us who seek to be pure as He was pure.

16. *Straightway.* As soon as He rose from the bath or immersion in the river. ¶ *Out of the water.* It is beyond reasonable doubt that the custom of the early Christians was to immerse the whole body of the baptized, as a general rule; and as little doubt that they regarded the quantity of water as indifferent, often using the form of pouring or sprinkling. The Anabaptist is to be answered in other ways, that by a debate on the amount of water necessary to save the soul in the Christian covenant. See note, v. 6. ¶ *The heavens were opened.* Some remarkable opening of the blue vault of the firmament, by which the eye seemed to penetrate far into its secret depths. This was done as Jesus was praying. Lu. iii. 21. For this ordinance must be attended with devout prayer, that God would vouchsafe His blessing upon it. ¶ *He saw.* Jesus saw it. John did also. John i. 33. St. Matthew is describing the event as it affected Jesus, and omits the influence it had on others. Parts of this sublime vision were probably seen by all present. ¶ *The Spirit of God.* The third person of the Trinity, the Spirit of regeneration, who was to succeed the Son of God in the great work of human salvation (John xiv. 16, 17; xvi. 7–15), to be the Comforter, Advocate, Gatherer, and Sanctifier of the faithful, dwelling in the Church, giving grace to preaching and the sacraments of a lawful ministry to the end of the world. Here it appeared; after this, by faith, it effects the regeneration and adoption of all the sons of God. 1 Cor. xii. 13; Eph. iv. 8; Gal. iv. 6. ¶ *Like a dove.* In such a form, but with greater splendor of light and size. The dove was an historical bird among the Jews. It brought back the olive branch to the ark. Gen. viii. 11. This dove brought the sign of salvation to those receiving "the like figure whereunto." 1 Pet. iii. 21. This was not of course a real bird, but some appearance which should arrest the attention by its glory; as the burning bush (Ex. iii.) and the cloudy pillar (xiii.), and the phenomena around Sinai, appeared for a while and then vanished. It sat on the head of Jesus, to point Him out to all present as the Son of God.

17. *A voice from heaven.* A voice from God the Father. We have here in this passage a glorious gathering of symbols to teach us the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. It is chosen by the Church as the Second Lesson for Trinity Sunday. The Father speaks from heaven, the Spirit descends as a dove, the Son is approved, being in form as a man. Baptism began therefore with this faith "in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost." So the Creed which we profess in baptism, is expanded from these same three names: God, the Father, His works of creation;

CHAPTER IV.

THEN[a] was Jesus led[b] up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

a Mark 1. 12; Lu. 4. 1–14.

2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered.

b 1 Kings 18. 12; Ezek. 3. 14; Acts 8. 39.

God, the Son, His acts of redemption; and God, the Holy Ghost, and His operations in sanctification. This we call the doctrine of the Trinity, or Tri-unity, i. e., the unity of three Persons in one God. We profess not to comprehend the deep mysteries which the Scriptures reveal; we *believe* them. ¶ *This is my beloved Son.* This Jesus is Messiah, my Son. Jesus in His human nature was Son of Mary, but being born of the power of the Most High, He was in His mysterious union of natures, of two natures, but one Person. God and man were one Christ. See Article II. of xxxix. Arts., in Pr. Bk. and notes John i. 1. Says S. Hillary, Bp. of Poictiers, A. D. 354: "From these things, thus fulfilled upon Christ, we learn that after the washing of water, the Holy Spirit also descends on us from the heavenly gates; on us also is shed an unction of heavenly glory, and an adoption to be sons of God, pronounced by the Father's voice." ¶ *In whom, &c.* In whose obedience God was satisfied. This was said for the first time of any one of our race. In Jesus sin was first conquered, and heaven reconciled. This chapter is selected for the morning lesson of the Feast of St. John the Baptist, June 24. We find him represented in the Collect, as holy in life, and now awaiting a blessed resurrection. John began from this event, recorded above, to *decrease.* He soon after retired to the more secluded haunts of Enon. The people regarded him as a prophet, and Herod feared him. But his work was done. Herod took offence at his rebukes, and put him in prison. Then his death was effected by two abandoned females. He was the last of the Jewish line of prophets, and was fearless, plain spoken and humble in spirit as any of them. He was born out of the course of nature, and sanctified from his mother's womb. It was God's will that he should live the life of a Nazarite or ascetic. Well may we desire that God would make us "so to follow his holy life, that we may truly repent, according to his preaching; and after his example constantly speak the truth, boldly rebuke vice, and patiently suffer for the truth's sake."

CHAPTER IV.

1. *Then.* Immediately after His baptism Jesus went into the wild solitudes on the east bank of the river, and "was with the wild beasts." ¶ *Led up.* St. Mark says *driven* by the Spirit; St. Luke that "He was full of the Holy Ghost." From the three we learn that He yielded to an inspiration from God of a most powerful character. The same had been exercised at times upon others. 1 Kings xviii. 12; Acts viii. 39. ¶ *The Spirit.* The same which came upon Him at His baptism, now led Him by impressions made upon His soul, to a period of trial and preparation for His ministry. Jesus began His work where Adam fell, by resisting the devil. ¶ *To be tempted.* To be tried by all the seductions of the evil spirit. Men are tempted through their evil passions. James i. 14. Jesus being sinless, the temptation came upon him through the weakness of a body miraculously macerated, and a head dizzy with extreme hunger. It is an awful and mysterious transaction. We must, however, look upon Him in it, as a man "tried in all points," like as we are; resisting sin, by the help of that grace, which we too may have, in answer to prayer. For it is thus that He shows us the spiritual wisdom, by which we may be saved from the evil of this world. ¶ *Devil. The Slanderer or false accuser.* He is one of the angels which kept not their first estate, for whom hell is prepared. Jude 6; Matt. xxv. 41. They are numerous

3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

(Lu. viii. 2, 30), powerful in the hearts of the wicked. John viii. 44. Satan is called by many names, in Scripture, which betray his abominable nature; Beelzebub, prince of this world, of the powers of the air, of devils; liar, murderer, the serpent, great dragon, a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. He first ruined the human race. Jesus, in saving it, began the war with him, that He might destroy the works of the devil. The first vow of our baptism is, that we renounce the devil and all his works. This the Spirit helps us to accomplish. Eph. vi. 11; 1 John iii. 8–10. There is on this account a personal interest for us in this evangelical narrative.

2. *And when He had fasted.* Jesus ate or drank nothing (Luke iv. 2), being sustained by a miracle. Moses did the same twice (Ex. xxxiv. 28; Deut. ix. 9, 25; x. 10), and "did neither eat bread nor drink water. Elijah did it, "going in the strength of the meat" he had eaten forty days and nights to Horeb. 1 Kings xix. 8. Israel, God's chosen people, were miraculously fed by manna by the command of God forty years. In these events, this trial of the Messiah was foreshadowed. In these instances, the immediate presence of Jehovah appears to render earthly sustenance of secondary importance. Jesus was in this manner made as nearly like unto us, in temptation to evil, as was possible for His sinless nature. It was a fearful situation at the last. The clamors of appetite, dizziness of the brain, the wildness of the whole nervous frame, made Him as weak in body and mind as it is possible to conceive of Him. And we may learn from this, that no weakness or clamor of appetite in us can ever justify the least sin. *Fasting*, in a strict sense, now signifies abstinence from food from morning till night, and then a moderate and not too dainty refreshment. In this manner we are expected to observe two days, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. In a larger sense it signifies "such a measure of abstinence as is more especially suited to extraordinary acts and exercises of devotion." See the *Table of Fasts* in Prayer Book. *Lent*, which is an old Saxon word for *Spring*, is a season of forty days' abstinence, observed in the Church, from the earliest times, in memorial of this fast of Jesus, and His victory over the devil. It precedes Easter, the Sunday of the Resurrection. The Jews in like manner observed a period of afflicting themselves and eating bitter herbs, to prepare for the Passover. The reason for this institution is founded on the principle, that the life of Jesus is the model of that of His followers. They must keep it always in view, each part in succession, and strive to become like Him in spirit. By this principle we may be kept in the limit of a reverential and ever-deepening piety. Lent is a season of self-examination and repentance. Ministers must exhort the people to renewed repentance and humiliation for sins past, and passions still lingering. "O Lord, who *for our sakes* didst fast forty days and forty nights, give us grace to use such abstinence, that our flesh being subdued to the Spirit, we may ever obey Thy godly motions in righteousness and true holiness, to Thy honor and glory."

3. *The tempter.* Satan. It is supposed that St. Paul alludes to the form in which he came in 2 Cor. xi. 14, "as an angel of light." Others imagine his form at this time to have been that of a pious, inquiring Jew. ¶ *If thou be, &c.* If you are the Messiah. He alludes to the voice heard at the previous baptism, and calls on Him to prove it for his satisfaction, by working a miracle. There are three temptations in this account, addressed to three principal passions. In us sinners they are called, 1. *The lust of the flesh*, the animal appetites, hunger, thirst, love of ease, aversion to pain, &c. 2. *The lust of the eye*, the desire of some *external* good, real or fancied, such as power, flatterers,

4 But he answered and said, It is written,[a] Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

a Deut. 8. 3.

5 Then the devil taketh him up into the[b] holy city, and setteth him on a pinacle of the temple,

b Neh. 11. 1; Matt. 27. 53; 1 Kings 14. 21.

vanities of the world, &c. 3. *The pride of life* (or perhaps better), *living pride*, the intense, abandoned pursuit of self-will, or mere abstract, spiritual temptation, by which Satan fell from heaven. These passions did not exist in Jesus as sinful, but as He was man, and rendered Him capable of temptation. To them Satan presented his wiles, 1. *To the flesh.* He tempted Jesus to satisfy His hunger by a useless miracle, showing a distrust of God. 2. *To the desire of gaining followers.* He tempted him to seek human glory by a rash daring test of the Almighty. 3. To commit bold and mortal sin for a vast and glittering prize. By the first mode of temptation Adam fell; by the second, false prophets; by the last, Satan himself, and many an angel of light, and angelic mind among men, have been ruined.

4. *But he answered.* The Spirit which led Jesus thither indicated to Him to wait on God to preserve Him. He as man was under the laws of Providence, and could not, when "driven by the Spirit," reassume the control of things without self-will and distrust of God. It was the sign of "an evil and adulterous generation" to desire miracles, when God does not see fit to use them. Lu. xxiii. 8, 9. We may doubt whether "bread alone" without the help of God could have restored the animal frame after such a fast. The suggestions of Satan leave the ruined soul to mourn over a lie. ¶ *It is written.* Deut. viii. 3. He does not deny the desire for food, but replies by a text which was exactly suited to his case. The Israelites, as Moses reminded them, had gone forty years sustained by a heavenly food. As they had been happy while obedient to God, and miserable whenever they thought to relieve themselves by their own power, Jesus intimated, that He had so clear a sense of the moral of their history, as to know that His own safety consisted in obedience and simple trust in the Almighty. Man does not live by his own power. In troubles and trials it is better to trust in the Lord and be doing good, than to become prosperous by the vicious maxims of wordly prudence.

5. *Taketh him up, &c.* The word in Greek signifies that Satan used such a degree of force as to render it necessary for Jesus to yield to it. In the same sense we read Matt. xxvii. 27, "The soldiers of the governor *took* Jesus," &c., i. e., with the strong hand of authority. See John xix. 6. It was permitted by God for the time that the tempter should have a limited power over the weakened physical frame of Jesus, in order that his weakness might be the more manifest in the failure of his temptation. *How* Satan accomplished this passage is not related; but, considering all the circumstances, it was probably by supernatural power. ¶ *Holy city.* It was the dearest spot of earth to the Israelite, for there was the holy temple of God, the seat of His presence, the centre of His promises. Is. lx. 14; Ps. xxvi. 8. It was equally dear to the Christians for whom this Gospel was written. To this day the Arabs around call it *El-kods, The Holy.* ¶ *Setteth Him*, or, made Him stand by exercising power over His body. It was not the will of our Lord to "enter into temptation" by his own act. ¶ *Pinnacle of the Temple.* The verge of one of its highest columns or towers. There was one over the South Porch called after Solomon, which looked into the valley of Hinnom 700 feet below, of which Josephus says, that it was hardly possible to stand upon it without dizziness. This wing or pinnacle was itself 150 feet high. The Temple was possibly at

6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written,[a] He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

[a] Ps. 91. 11. 12.

the time filled with the crowd of worshippers, who would have witnessed this novel descent. See notes, ch. xxi. 12. The blessed Jesus, weak with long fasting, could only by the strongest resistance conquer the morbid desire of sinking down and giving way to the suggestion of Satan, and with the extremest difficulty stand on this dizzy precipice. The body is in a manner made the partial avenue of temptation, and pleads to sink back or desperately venture on the leap, trusting to the care of the Almighty for preservation. We can imagine the potency of this temptation over our own riotous, depraved natures, the physical suggestions which would have been craving change, the fearful nervousness impelling the will, inventing sophistries, and deceiving the conscience. What sinner, then, but must feel that the usual "deceitfulness of sin," which is offered as an excuse for sins, namely, that one could not *help the fall into sin*, is absurd and wicked. Perhaps no man has ever felt a stronger temptation than this one. How subtle, too, the reason which the place would suggest. The Jews expected the Messiah to come to Jerusalem through the air in some supernatural manner. Satan calculated on this expectation, and implies it—"If thou be the Son of God, i. e., the Messiah, now show it to the people and they will believe." False prophets and false churches invent startling and useless miracles to astonish men; but not so the true Prophet. Jesus knew that God was to prove Him to have come down from heaven, by works of holiness and power, and He leaves all in His hands. John vi. 38.

6. *It is written.* That is, *concerning the Messiah.* Ps. xci. 11, 12. "If you are the Messiah of whom Daniel spake (vii. 13. See notes, chs. xii. 38; xvi. 1) as coming in the clouds of heaven, then prove it now by this miracle, for surely you will be saved in the descent, by angels." Satan was correct in citing this Psalm of the Messiah, as the Gospels show by many other similar citations. See Luke xxiv. 44. And the Christian church uses the Psalms in worship as referring principally to the perfections and holiness of the Messiah, which Christians are to imitate, in order to receive in Him all necessary blessings. It was, however, a wicked perversion of the Psalm, as Satan intended it. We have only to open it to see that it promises the Son of God that entire, continual care of Divine Providence which is represented as being conducted in its various parts by the angels. They should have care of Him—of all Christians in Him (see Heb. i. 14), to keep Him from injury. But they have no charge for such as go out of the pure and perfect way to venture rashly on their own safety, that the consequences of their folly may be averted by a miracle. When a viper fastened on the hand of St. Paul, he shook it off without receiving injury. Acts xxviii. 3–5. So says the 91st Psalm: "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and the adder." And Jesus promised the disciples immunity from many natural dangers while serving Him. But if St. Paul had offered his hand to the viper, or taken it into his bosom and been bitten, he would doubtless have died. The temptation offered here was to do a startling and showy miracle, whose results in a moral sense would have been evil. He would not have persuaded the Jews, He would have left an example of self-will and "tempting God."

7. *Tempt the Lord thy God.* See Deut. vi. 16. To tempt God is not to seek to induce Him to do evil, which is impossible (James i. 13), but it is to doubt His presence and care, to complain at necessary evils and dangers, and to seek to escape from them by our own will

7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again,[a] Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;

a Deut. 6. 16.

and wisdom. The words quoted are from Deut. vi. 16, and they refer again to the conduct of the Israelites at Massah. Ex. xvii. 1–7. The last verse says, the people tempted the Lord, i. e., doubted and murmured against Him for the lack of water at Massah, saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?" Jesus foils the tempter by this instance of the sad consequences of yielding to his seductions. He will wait for God's time to give Him credit with men and followers who shall believe in Him.

8. *An exceeding high mountain.* A venerable tradition fixes this temptation on Mount Quarantania, "a miserable dreary place," says the traveller Maundrell, "consisting of rocks and mountains, so torn and disordered, as if the earth had suffered some great convulsion, in which its very bowels had been turned outward. From the top of these hills of desolation we had, however, a delightful prospect of the mountains of Arabia, the Dead Sea and the plains of Jericho, into which at last we descended, after about five hours march from Jerusalem. As soon as we entered the plain, we turned to the left hand, and going for about an hour that way, came to the foot of the Quarantania, (so called from our Lord's forty days' fast,) which they say is the mountain where the devil tempted Him, with the visionary scene of all the kingdoms of the world." Others favor Mt. Nebo as the spot, because it is something higher, and was the place to which Moses went up, to view the land of Palestine. But in a story plainly miraculous, a few feet of altitude cannot weigh against ancient testimony; and the memories of Moses would not be of a kind agreeable to the purpose of the fiend. The vast inhabited eastern world could be seen from any mountain only by a miracle, real or delusive. ¶ *Of the world.* Of the inhabited eastern continent, or so much as was governed in organized kingdoms. The Greek word, *kosmos*, is not used in a single instance in the Gospels, in the sense which some here give it of the land of Palestine. It always signifies *the world*, in its largest and most abstract sense. John i. 10; xv. 19. St. Luke uses a word which signifies the *inhabited world*, then governed mostly by the Roman Emperor. Luke iv. 5; ii. 1. And why against the plain force of the words should the spirit of unbelief invent here an absurdity? The *kingdoms* which could be seen from any mountain of Judea and their glories, would have been a paltry bribe. The view from Quarantania, was little likely to tempt ambition. Satan, the prince of this world, could work false miracles; and his causing the Lord Jesus to see the glorious cities and courts of the whole known world, from Gaul to the distant India, we can only believe. Whether it was done by actual inspection or delusive visions, we have no means of determining. The two Evangelists have left us words which cannot be confined to the small territory lying around any mountain of Palestine. Moses on Nebo also was *caused* to see, by an increase of vision, the whole land of Palestine. Jesus was to be greatly tempted, for on this last die, was the whole power and skill of Satan to be shown. All the world from Britain and Spain to the Euphrates, from Germany to the sources of the Nile, was given up to the worship of devils. He is willing to yield his control over individuals, if he can corrupt the only Saviour who can keep them from him at last. ¶ *The glory of them.* Their wealth, great buildings, armies and commerce. He had ruled men for ages by these toys, and offers all to Jesus.

9. *If thou wilt fall down.* "Do this

9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

10 Then said Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written,[a] Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

11 Then the devil leaveth him, and behold, angels[b] came and ministered unto him.

a Deut. 6. 18; 10. 20.

b Lu. 22. 43; Heb. 1. 6 14.

little act, kneel to me as the one able to give them to you, and they are yours. You shall be Messiah, if you will in my way. They are mine, for my children, wicked men, rule them under me. I will join to make you popular, all-powerful in them." False religions, heresies and schisms are those which have yielded to this temptation. Satan was the god of this world, but severely ruled by the Almighty. So there was a lie in his mouth. He could not bestow the kingdoms of the world at his pleasure. This last trial of the devil was a bold, desperate venture. The other temptations had concealed the hook. Here a bold, impious sin is daringly proposed for a delusive bribe. There are degrees in sin. The basest is sensuality, the most common is the sin of ambition, the blackest is the defiance of truth and God. ¶ *Worship me.* See note ch. ii. 2. To worship Satan, was to kneel to him, as the one able to bestow this gift of the world, to be bound under him, and to rule it for him. It seemed a small act, but would have ruined the world if He had yielded. Beware the little acts of sin; they may entangle you in the sad slavery of evil before they are done.

10. *Get thee hence, Satan.* Begone, my enemy. The word Satan means an enemy; hence by bad pre-eminence the great enemy, the devil. To the other trials of His virtue Jesus had replied without emotion, but now that the dignity of His Father is insulted, He drives the wicked one from His presence with indignation. As the brook which glides in light, receives no soil from the clouds which shadow it for a moment, so the purity of Jesus receives no injury from these wicked suggestions. How perfect His holiness, which under such suffering manifested no quiver of doubt, no forgetfulness of the will of God. Jesus now names the tempter, to show him that he is known, and therefore powerless. He foils him with the "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Eph. vi. 17. ¶ *Thou shalt worship.* Worship is due to God only. It was paid by Jesus in His human nature. There can be only one supreme object of our affection and service. That object is God, who will not give His glory to another.

11. *Leaveth Him.* St. Luke says "for a season," being to return again either in the trials of opposition to His ministry or amid the terrible scenes of His Passion. ¶ *Angels came, &c.* After this fast of forty days, His body was probably in such a condition as to require supernatural assistance, in order to its restoration to the common life of other men. And after His trials He is cheered in spirit by the company of the pure inhabitants of heaven. Angels are described in Scripture as the spiritual agents of God, in carrying out the plans of His providence, and in ministering to the children of God. Ps, xxxiv. 7; Matt. xviii. 10. We learn from this scene of our Lord's life, that our human nature for the first time gained an entire victory over all the arts and powers of evil; that God suffered Him to be tempted by sin, that He might be an example and guide to us in the great battle with it, in which all are engaged (Heb. ii. 10), that He might win upon us as a Saviour and Guide, by showing Himself as one not too far removed from this scene of earthly sorrow (Heb. iv. 15); that He might prove to us, that though Adam in his innocence had fallen by the wiles of the evil spirit, yet that man, sustained by the divine grace,

could, and following His example would conquer him. Observe that Jesus uses no weapon against the devil, drawn from his sublimer nature, but defeats him on the ground of our common humanity. His defence was the love of God, and unfaltering trust in His word. 1 John iv. 4, If we have this faith and love, we may still be penitent for sin and conscious of guilt, but we may avoid and repel the presumptious sins of wicked men, See 1 John iii. 3–9. The Church uses this portion of St. Matthew, as the Gospel for the first Sunday in Lent, and bids us us pray that from this example "we may have grace to use such abstinence that our flesh being subdued to the Spirit,

Map of Galilee.

This map contains the region of country in which our blessed Saviour spent the larger portion of the period of His life among men. He often visited Jerusalem, but He abode in Galilee, chiefly in the towns of Nazareth (from which He was expelled by His neighbors) and Capernaum. In Cana, Nain, and other villages, He performed His wonderful works. Near Bethsaida He fed the multitudes with bread by a miracle; and on Mt. Tabor He was transfigured. Every portion of this favored land of Galilee is made sacred to the Christian by the thought, that here walked and taught the Incarnate Saviour of the race. Here was manifested that divine life of love and mercy, by which we learn to escape from sin and evil, and become the children of God. We present to the reader a similar map of the *Environs of Jerusalem* in the second volume of this work. See note St. Luke, Ch. II. 4.

12 ¶ Now when Jesus had heard that John was[†] cast into prison, he departed into Galilee;

13 And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea-coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim;

14 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet,[a] saying,

15 The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, *by* the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles:

16 The people which sat in

† Marg. *delivered up.*

a Is. 9. 1—2.

we may ever obey Thy godly motions in righteousness and true holiness."

12. *Now.* This was about one year after the baptism of Jesus. In the meantime had occurred John's testimony to Jesus, and other events related in John i. 15–51; the marriage in Cana of Galilee, John ii.; *the first Passover*, and the conversation with the Samaritan woman. John iv. 1–42. See the death of John, ch. xiv. 1–13. It is to be borne in mind that St. Matthew has regulated his narration more by the *order of his subjects* than by the order of time. ¶ *Galilee.* This was the home of Jesus, so far as He had one. Ch. ii. 22. He went into the province of Herod perhaps to keep attention upon Himself and His connection with John; perhaps to complete the choosing of His disciples before entering on his more open ministry. He had nothing to fear from this Herod, who, though he imprisoned John, did not intend to proceed to any cruel measures against him or his friends.

13. *Leaving Nazareth.* That is, after they had wickedly rejected Him, and sought His life. See Luke iv. 14-30. ¶ *Dwelt at Capernaum.* This was a small town situated on the north-west coast of the Sea of Galilee, about seventy miles north-east of Jerusalem. It is marked as "upon the sea coast" to distinguish it from another town of the same name. It was probably built after the return of the Jews from captivity. The name signifies the *City of Comfort.* It received it from a small spring of great repute which ran through the valley of Gennesaret. It is now a poor ruinous village, occupied by a few fishermen, and called *Tel-Hoom.* This town became the chief residence of Jesus, from this time, and was called "His own city." Matt. ix. 11. Here he did many notable miracles. John iv. 46; Matt. viii. 13, 14; ix. 23, &c. It was, indeed, exalted unto heaven in privilege. It is now in ruins, darkness and poverty. It was well fitted for the residence of Jesus as His disciples chiefly dwelt here, and the lake offered Him facilities for visiting the country around. He sought none of the great cities of Judea, but began the Gospel of Salvation in this little obscure fishing village.

14. *That it might be fulfilled.* St. Matthew does not give the exact words of Isaiah ix. 1, but rather the sense, applying it to this period of our Lord's life. ¶ *Beyond Jordan.* Either on the east or west side. In this case it is the western side. The Hebrew word from which these are translated has this ambiguity. See Deut. iii. 25. ¶ *Galilee of the Gentiles.* The word Galilee is from the Hebrew *Galal*, to go about, signifying a country frequented by the pagan nations. It was probably used in the mouth of the Jew as a term of contempt, until it came into common use. It seems at first to have been the name of the tract of country lying around the sources of the Jordan; but, in our Saviour's time, it was extended to the whole region as far south as Samaria. This was divided into Upper and Lower Galilee. It was mostly occupied by Gentiles, that is, persons of other nations, not in covenant with Jehovah. Foreigners from Egypt, Arabia, and other countries were mixed up with the population of Galilee. Many Jews resided there who seem to have been despised by the dwellers in Judea.

darkness, saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up.

17 ¶ From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say,[a] Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

a Matt. 3. 2; 10. 7.

18 ¶ And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon[b] called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishers.

b John 1. 42.

16. *People which sat in darkness.* In great ignorance of the true religion, and of the proper service of the one true God. The people of this region were given to idolatry and, at the same time, to the worship of Jehovah, as the tutelary deity of that land. See 2 Kings xvii. 24-34. ¶ *Shadow of death.* Thickest darkness, such as is in the abyss of the dead. Job x. 21, 22. The Hebrews taught that all the souls of the dead were detained in the abyss of Sheol, a place of utter darkness. Such was the spiritual ignorance of those nations which were not in covenant with God, their souls were "dead in trespasses and sin,"—buried, as it were, in their bodies as in the grave. The light which was in them was darkness, and their sins enormous, and their condition miserable. Such was the condition of the world when the *True Light* shone and instructed men in the will of God here, and His intentions in regard to the future. This instruction, which gives peace and purity for this life, and hope and consolation for another, is called light—that which makes manifest what the will of God is. Eph. v. 13. This light of the gospel first appeared in the obscure retreats of Galilee, a place which was so given up to ignorance and sin, that it is impossible to imagine any other origin in it of this gospel than from God Himself.

17. *Repent, &c.* In these few words is the epitome of all that prophets and apostles have written. Repentance—the Church—as a way in this life to heaven hereafter. See chap. iii. 2.

18. *Sea of Galilee.* It has other names, taken from cities upon its shores, as Chinneroth, Gennesaret and Tiberias. Deut. iii. 17. It is now called the Sea of Tabaria, Tiberias being the last city of importance upon it. This celebrated lake is about twelve miles long and six broad, surrounded by huge precipitous mountains and fertile valleys between. On the east the shores are in many places inaccessible. On the west there are found valleys watered by small streams, and adorned with cities and villages. The water is clear, pure, and deep, abounding in fish. Flocks of pelicans, storks, and wild ducks visit it, and occasionally vultures and eagles are seen flapping their broad wings above it. Through the centre of the lake, the ripple of the strong current of the river Jordan appears. This current, and the mountains around, combine to render it subject to sudden and violent storms from the south. On the shores once stood the flourishing cities of Chorazin, Capernaum, Tiberias, Hippo, &c., where are now found only a few huts of poor fishermen or solitary ruins. Josephus described the shores as fertile and beautiful, especially the valley of Gennesaret, lying to the north-west. But, under the present misrule of the Turks, it is a scene of poverty and desolation, giving a scanty support to its few inhabitants. Lonely, desolate, and silent, it is sacred to the Christian, who remembers that there lived once the Saviour of mankind, teaching men of the fountain of life and offering them the riches of His grace. ¶ *Two brethren.* Peter and Andrew—one, famous, as in one sense, though not the Romish, the chiefest of the Apostles—the other barely mentioned in the sacred history, and little known otherwise. Peter, the chief of the Apostles, not by rank, but by his bold, energetic character, was to open the gates of the Church to the

19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

20 And they straightway left[a] *their* nets, and followed him.

21 And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James *the son* of Zebedee,[b] and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets: and he called them.

22 And they immediately left

a Mark 10. 28--31.

b Mark 1. 19.

Gentiles, and is known as having a part in all the important events of the first history of the Church. He was bold to resist danger, impetuous in his passions against wrong, proud of his Jewish birth, faithful, with one sad exception, as a friend; obedient as a disciple, and, when aided by grace and warned by experience, unyielding in the course which he knew to be right. He was often the first of the disciples to speak, manifesting the impression that he had made upon them. The disciples were fishermen, but men doubtless of great natural energy and decided character. They were unskilled in the sophistic learning of their age—but rudely versed in their dangerous occupation to stem the wilder sea of human passions. Let us not imagine that God chooses to have men of feeble mind and little capacity to serve him. The Ministry, which began with these two brethren, has room for an Andrew unknown to fame, but it needs and uses the high resolve, the sublime repose and the unhesitating confidence of such men as St. Peter.

19 *Fishers of men.* Jesus was known to these men before this call. John i. 40–42. We are not to imagine this a sudden, unexplained call of a total stranger, but the summons of One, of whose right to their obedience they were already aware. He speaks in their language, as if to say, 'As fishermen you have the skill, knowledge and patience, to catch the tribes of the deep, and courage to dare its storms. Come with me, I will call for all these talents in the nobler work of winning men? St. Austin happily says: "Jesus chose not kings, senators, philosophers, or orators, but He chose common, poor, and untaught fishermen. Had one learned been chosen he might have attributed the choice to the merit of his learning. But our Lord Jesus Christ, willing to bow the necks of the proud, sought not to gain fishermen by orators, but gained an Emperor by a fisherman. Great was Cyprian the pleader (Bp. of Carthage A. D. 248), but Peter the fisherman was before him."

20. *Straightway.* Without hesitation. They were willing and ready to obey. ¶ *Left their nets.* They left them in care of others, as Elijah once did with his plough. 1 Kings xix. 19-21. They were ready to follow the Messiah. Their ideas were confused and erroneous. They looked then for a temporal kingdom, and little dreamed of the trouble and persecution before them. They had very little notion of the *spiritual* character of Christ and the cross, but knew Jesus to be powerful, wise and good, working miracles, teaching with authority, and claiming to be their Messiah. When we read (Acts 1. 6.) of them in the very last interview with Jesus, still imagining Him to be *an earthly sovereign*, we can hardly consider them now moved by purely spiritual motives in obeying His call. They were as yet *Jews*, disciples or learners, following their teacher; or, as they probably thought themselves, unarmed soldiers following a disguised Prince. Their *docility* led them on till by degrees they learned other things, and saw the heavenly light, felt the divine inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and became Christian Apostles and Martyrs. So may we follow Christ, leave the world and sin, and obey Him as we best can to-day. It may be poorly done, but if we follow on, it will be to conquer the world, and win a heaven, of whose real glories we may to-day have but little notion.

21. *James, John.* See note, ch. x 2. *Left their father.* These events, so

the ship, and their father, and followed him.

23 ¶ And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their[a] synagogues and preaching the gospel[b] of the kingdom, and healing[c] all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people.

24 And his fame went through-

a Matt. 9. 35; Lu. 4. 15, 45.

b Matt. 24. 19; Mark 1. 14. *c* Lu. 4–16.

briefly told by St. Matthew, were not done in a sudden, unnatural way. They were often with their father after this, and knew of his welfare. They left him with 'hired servants' and doubtless a sufficient support. But this act signified that henceforth they would make it their first business to follow Jesus. A Christian must always esteem the direct command of God as supreme, but must be sure that it is such before he fails in the duties which are already binding upon him. Salome, the mother of these two men, was at times with them (Matt. xx. 20), probably their father also. The call of Christ is now made to us in the preaching of the Gospel, and the administration of the Sacraments, which we should regard with faith, and follow along the spiritual way of righteousness, as these disciples did at the personal call of Jesus. In the words of the Collect for St. Andrew's day, of which this passage is the Gospel, we may pray "Almighty God, who didst give such grace unto Thy Holy Apostle St. Andrew, that he readily obeyed the calling of Thy Son Jesus Christ, and followed Him without delay; grant unto us all that we *being called by Thy holy word*, may forthwith give ourselves up *obediently to fulfil Thy holy commandments* through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

23. *Galilee.* See note, ch. ii. 22. ¶ *Synagogue.* This word signified at first *an assembly*, and was afterward applied to the Jewish places of worship. The Jews could have but one Temple, that on Mount Moriah, where they could meet God with sacrifices and oblations. In the Temple, the worship was conducted by a *Levitical succession* of priests, divided into three orders of divine appointment and unchangeable. The synagogues were of human institution, as good men were led by the spirit of piety to build them. How pious men may have worshipped in early times we know not, but find David bitterly lamenting his absence from the Temple. Ps. xlii. xliii. lxiii. lxxxiv. In the time of Ezra (Neh. viii. 1–9) the people met in other places than the Temple for prayer and explanations of the Scriptures. Very little is now known of the regulations of the Synagogue. Wherever ten pious, learned and wealthy men were found to attend the worship, there was a synagogue. The buildings were of two parts—the western end containing an ark or chest where the rolls of the law and prophets were deposited; the other, or body of the Church, occupied by the people, who sat with their faces toward the Temple, the elders sitting in *the chief seats* facing them. The pulpit or reading desk was between them. The reader for the time stood to read the Scriptures, and sat to expound them. The services were held on Saturdays (the Sabbath), and in some places on Mondays and Thursdays. There were, according to the Rabbins, 480 synagogues in Jerusalem alone. Jesus attended the synagogue wherever He went, as also His disciples. Lu. iv. 15–22. Acts xiii. 14, 15. They also observed carefully the laws in regard to the Temple worship in Jerusalem. Now it is certain that our Lord and His disciples therefore *used a liturgy* or set form of worship. The Form of prayer of the synagogue was, according to Lightfoot, 1st. Nineteen prayers offered by the Minister, the people standing; 2. The repetition of their Phylacteries; 3. The reading of the Law and the Prophets. These were divided into fifty-four sections, to be read through annually. Acts xv. 21; xiii. 27. 4. The expounding the law in a simple manner or preaching. Lu. iv. 20. 5. The whole concluded with a

out all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

short prayer or benediction. This liturgy our Lord countenanced, and in this act justified this form of public address to God. Therefore we find the first Christians in all the world using an established form of common prayer in their public services. ¶ *Preaching.* Plain explanations of the Scriptures showing the character of the Messiah's Kingdom. See note, ch. iii. 2. ¶ *Gospel of the kingdom.* The glad tidings of His coming to reign among men. It is noticeable that the doctrine which our Lord and His disciples preached as prominent over all others, was that of the *Kingdom*, the Dispensation or economy of grace. Ch. xxiv. 14; Neh. i. 14; Eph. iii. 8–13. We should therefore so believe the *Gospel of the kingdom*, as to do supreme honor to the King; so love the Church as to see in all her services the presence of the Lord, blessing His faithful people.

24. *Syria.* All the region lying about Palestine. ¶ *Divers diseases.* Various sorts of disease; more than can be mentioned. Jesus in this manner proved that He was gifted with supernatural powers, and sent from God, as He could cure every disease in simple miraculous ways, and used His power only in doing good to men. When such preaching was pressed home by such arguments, we may wonder that any could refuse to believe in Him. Says an ancient writer: "*The diseases* are the more grievous pains of the body; the *sicknesses*, the slighter. As He cured the bodily pains by virtue of His divine power, so *He cured the spiritual* by the word of His mercy. He first teaches, and then performs the cures, for two reasons. First, that what is *needed most*, may come first, for *it is the word of holy instruction, and not miracles that edify the soul.* Secondly, because teaching is commended by miracles, not the converse." ¶ *Possessed with devils.* Demoniacs, persons ruled by evil spirits against their own wills. We should not be surprised, that at the coming of our Lord to conquer the powers of evil, they were allowed to make unusually clear proofs of their malice. Evil spirits, dæmons or devils occupied the persons of certain unfortunate men, causing generally some terrible and incurable disease. Sometimes it took the form of epilepsy, or madness or lunacy, but was none of these. For as soon as the evil spirit was expelled from the soul, the physical symptoms ceased. The Jews had among them men called *exorcists*, who professed to expel these spirits, by using over the patient a holy name, or by prayers and other ceremonies. Matt. xii. 27; Mk. ix. 38. Jesus cast them out in His own name. Lu. iv. 33–38. He gave a similar power to His disciples. Thus He began to triumph openly over the kingdom of Satan. It is a curious instance of the abiding spirit of unbelief in us, of which the Evil one takes advantage, that some, even good men, have perplexed the plain language of the Gospels, by doubts of the reality of these possessions. A little reflection will show us the folly of such doubts. 1. The evangelists declare these spirits to have been devils or unclean spirits. 2. They distinguish them from diseases. 3. The evil spirits knew, and saluted Jesus as the Messiah. 4. They answered questions, gave their names, and passed into unreasoning animals. See Lu. viii. 27–37; iv. 34; Matt. xii. 25–28. These things leave no doubt, but that evil spirits did actually hold possession of certain guilty and unfortunate men at that time. The custom of exorcism, and the belief in demoniac possession, passed into the Christian Church, and continued for some ages. If it then became a superstition, it is now too much a subject of rationalism, showing that Satan has more than one method of ruling men. Jesus cast his legions out of men's bodies, in order to manifest

25 And there followed him great[a] multitudes of people from Galilee, and *from* Decapolis, and *from* Jerusalem, and *from* Judea, and *from* beyond Jordan.

[a] Lu. 6. 17–19.

His divine power to cast the unclean spirits out of their souls. Let us beware the latter evil, of unbelief, which is worse than the first. ¶ *Lunatic.* Insane persons whose madness was periodical, and increased at the time of the full moon. They were so called from the Latin word *Luna*, the moon. In English we say, *moonstruck*. Physicians inform us of certain kinds of madness, to which the term lunacy properly belongs, though they give a different reason for it from the ancients. The latter supposed some malign diabolic influence in the moon, to account for facts which they observed. The physicians declare that one species of madness is attended with great irritability of the nerve of the eye, and is always increased by the continued action of light upon it. This of course occurs with the increase of the length of the moonlight, and is prevented by confining the patient in a dark room at such times. The "stimulus of light," says Esquinol, physician to the Hospital La Salpetrière, Paris, "frightens some lunatics, pleases others, but agitates all." The ancients and common people now had good reason for the name, though they may have erred in assigning the cause. St. Jerome says, that it was not the moon that affected such, but "the subtlety of evil spirits." Who can say the good Father nay! ¶ *Palsy.* Several species of disease are contained under this name, according as the shock strikes the whole or a part of the body. Paralysis signifies a loosening of the part with the loss of motion and sensation in it. By this relaxation of the nerves and muscles, a man is disabled from all voluntary motion and ability of helping himself. It is hardly ever curable, being produced generally by some injury of the great centre of life and motion—the spine. St. Matthew mentions three sorts of tormenting incurable disease, as extreme cases to show the power of Christ. ¶ *He healed them.* By miracle. *A miracle* is a deed above the common powers of nature and man. God confines both to certain laws, which He alone can forego or neglect. Therefore when a man has this same power, it is given him by God. Jesus doing miracles in His own name, by His own right asserts, and proves a claim to be the Son of God. John x. 25–38. Jesus did not as yet require any confession of faith, in those whom He cured, as He afterwards began to do; for, 1. Their actions in bringing the sick to Him from such distances, showed faith; 2. He had not as yet so spread abroad a knowledge of His name and doctrine that all who came to Him could be expected to know it. The expressions of faith in Him become more clear and decided as we go on.

25. *Decapolis.* Deca-polis, the region of *ten cities.* It lay to the east of the sea of Galilee in the limits of Manasseh. The names of these cities are supposed to have been Hippo, Gadara, Pella, Capitolias, Arbela, Caratha, Gerasa, Philadelphia, Dium and Sychopolis.

Additional Note.

1, verses 18, 21. The three disciples, Peter, James and John, are frequently mentioned in the Gospels, and we will have occasion to speak of them hereafter. But *St. Andrew* hardly appears after this. A festival is appointed in remembrance of him Nov. 30, in which the Church calls on us to commemorate his willing, prompt obedience to the call of Jesus. Little is known of him for certain. Origen gives a tradition that he labored among the Scythians, a wild tribe living to the north of the Black Sea. Others fix the place of his preaching at Sogdiana, near Cholcis on the Euxine. A church is said to have been founded by him at Byzantium, and he may have afterward altered his residence to Epirus and Achaia in Greece. He is believed to have suffered martyrdom at Patrae, in Achaia, upon a

CHAPTER V.

AND seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him.

a Lu. 6. 20, &c. *b* Is. 57. 15; 66. 2.

2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them,[a] saying,

3 Blessed *are* the poor in spirit:[b] for[c] theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

c Is. 2. 8.

cross, which from its shape (×) still bears his name. The Greeks of Constantinople were certainly persuaded that his body was conveyed to that city about A. D. 357—a proof that the traditions concerning him were currently believed in the 4th century. One brother was exalted to a high station among the apostles; the other is known only by the dim light of tradition. Birth gives us no station in Christ's Church, and fame is an accident. Whether we are known as Peter, or obscure as Andrew, let us seek to be holy in imitation of them both. In heaven all accidental differences will be compensated and ended.

CHAPTER V.

1. *The multitudes.* See last verse, ch. iv. Great numbers of people followed Jesus at this time, expecting some public declaration of His being the Messiah, in keeping with the merciful deeds which they had beheld. This is called the *Sermon on the Mount*, the first and most complete exposition of the terms and requirements of the Gospel covenant. The crowd looked for the Messiah to be an earthly king, and were hoping that Jesus was about to set up His government among them, free them from the Roman yoke, and restore to the world the golden age of plenty. Jesus set forth another sort of kingdom. The substance of this discourse is contained in the sixth chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, and many of its teachings are scattered through the same, as they were repeated at different times. ¶ *A mountain.* He did this to be the better seen and heard by the people. A little to the north of Mount Tabor, and near Capernaum, is a remarkable elevation, called to this day the Mount of Beatitudes, and believed to be the one on which this sermon was given. Tradition has fixed on it as the same, on which Jesus spent the night in prayer, before the solemn election of the twelve disciples. ¶ *Was set.* The Jewish teachers sat down to teach. Lu. iv. 16–20; Acts xvi. 13. Standing was a mark of reverence for the inspired writings. ¶ *His disciples.* Learners, persons attached to Him closely. They sat near Him, and were in a manner identified with Him.

3. *Blessed are the poor in spirit.* "I bless them, I count them and declare them blessed, for such is their reward." He spake as one having authority. The people looked to hear a king speak and call his armies to the field, and condemn the Roman oppressors. To correct these notions, Jesus begins with a blessing on the poor in spirit—the humble and unworldly. To pronounce blessed, in the mouth of Jesus, was to declare one so; or to convey a spiritual favor to one, as He did to the little children. ¶ *Poor in spirit.* St. Luke says, more briefly, *the poor*, meaning the same. The poor, if they are proud, envious, or profligate are not blessed in any sense. The word here means *humble*, the lowly in spirit, no matter in what rank of life—such men of all classes as did follow Jesus and obtain this kingdom. 1 Pet. v. 6. Three sorts of men are here blessed: 1. Such as have followed Jesus in His poverty, embracing an humble and poor estate from a sense of duty. Such are missionaries now. 2. They who, poor by necessity, are still contented and pious in their poverty. 3. They who, like Zacchæus and Dorcas, use wealth as stewards for the good of others, and are ready to welcome the Saviour at His coming. Humility is confined to no rank—it makes a man contented in any station, obedient in all. The great Example of it was Jesus Himself. Phil. ii. 5–12. After Him, the Scripture

4 Blessed *are* they that mourn:[a] for they shall be[b] comforted.

a Joel 2. 12, 14. *b* Is. 40. 1; 6. 12. 2 Cor. 1. 4.

5 Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.[c]

c Ps. 37. 11; Num. 12. 13.

saints testified their humility by enduring patiently every misfortune and affliction. Here at the outset of Christ's teaching we are warned that if we will gain heaven we must keep no hold on this world, nor err, by supposing that God intends to make us happy in His service by gratifying all our selfish, worldly desires. Some Christians find out late in life that they began to follow, as the disciples did, expecting satisfaction in their own way. They at last find that God's way is better than theirs, and become humbled by His grace. ¶ *Kingdom of heaven.* Kingdom of the heavens or heavenly kingdom. Again it is called the kingdom of God. These words are adopted from Daniel ii. 44, vii. 13, 15, and denote that everlasting kingdom which the Lord was to set up on earth; that spiritual covenant of Christ, which was to subsist in imperfect circumstances here, to become complete in the heavens hereafter. In some passages the words refer to that kingdom here, as Matt. xiii. 41, 47; xx. 1. In others to the future kingdom. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10; xv. 50; Gal. v. 21. Generally they include, as here, both ideas, and are equivalent to the word in common use now—*the Church.* This word is from the Greek *Kurios*, the Lord. Kyriarke, Kyrch, Kirk, Church, meaning the Lord's people or possession. It is fit to translate these words of our Lord, kingdom of heaven. The Apostles used it altogether. The Church belongs to the poor in spirit: 1. In this life. They humble themselves to repent and receive its yoke, and become as little children to learn wisdom. 2. In the future life. They have the mind of Jesus, and the gracious fruits of the Spirit. 1 Pet. ii. 2–5.

4. *They that mourn.* There are two sorts of mourning of which the Scriptures speak, mourning of necessity, for affliction, sickness and sorrow, and mourning for sin with a 'godly sorrow.' They who mourn in either manner must be piously disposed in order to receive this comfort. 'The sorrow of the world worketh death.' 2 Cor. vii. 10. Whatever trouble comes upon those who truly sorrow for sin, it does not spring from the ground, it is God's visitation, "and for whatever cause it be sent upon us, whether to try our patience for the example of others, and that our faith may be found in the day of the Lord, laudable, glorious and honorable, or else it be sent upon us to correct and amend in us whatsoever doth offend the eyes of our heavenly Father; we may know that if we truly repent us of our sins and bear our sickness or trouble patiently, trusting in God's mercy, for His dear Son Jesus Christ's sake, and render unto Him humble and hearty thanks for his fatherly visitation, submitting ourselves wholly unto His will, it shall turn to our profit and help us forward in the way that leadeth unto everlasting life." *See Visitation Office in Prayer Book.* The ordinances of religion comfort us here when all other things fail, and God at the last will wipe tears from all eyes which have mourned for sin.—"In the eye of heaven blessedness begins there, where misery begins in human estimation."—*St. Ambrose.*

5. *The meek.* "There are two opposite characters under which mankind may generally be classed. The one possesses vigor, firmness, resolution, is daring, active, quick in its sensibilities, jealous of its fame, eager in its attachments, inflexible in its purposes and violent in its resentments. The other meek, yielding, complying, forgiving, not prompt to act but willing to suffer, silent and gentle under rudeness and insult; suing for reconciliation when others would demand satisfaction; giving way to the pushes of impudence, conceding and indulgent to the prejudices, the wrongheadedness, the intractability of those with whom he has to deal."—*Dr. Paley.* Contrast Moses and Pharaoh—David and Saul. David was meek before Saul, reverenced his per-

6 Blessed *are* they which do hunger and[a] thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.[b]

a Ps. 41. 1, 2; 107. 9. *b* Ps. 81. 10.

son, and left vengeance to God. He was king, when Saul had miserably perished, and perhaps spake from experience when he said (Psalm xxxvii. 11), "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth and delight themselves in great abundance." Meekness is not to be confused with a tame, passionless character. It never degenerates into cowardice or insensibility. The Christian must have a fervent earnest love for holy things, and for his brethren, which may often excite his anger against irreverence and wrong. John ii. 17. He must be angry and sin not. His zeal must be unselfish, just, and submissive to God. The Catechism sums up the practical traits of the meek. 'Our duty is to walk humbly with God, to submit to all our governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters, to order ourselves lowly and reverently to all our betters; to hurt nobody by word or deed, to bear no malice nor hatred in our hearts, to esteem others better than ourselves.' The perfect example of meekness was seen in our Lord, who dying on the cross prayed for the pardon of his enemies, because of their ignorance. Luke xxiii. 34. ¶ *Inherit the earth.* Bp. Porteus says: "By inheriting the earth, our Lord meant, inheriting those things which are without doubt the *greatest blessings* upon earth, calmness and composure of spirit, tranquillity, cheerfulness, peace and comfort of mind. Now these I apprehend are the peculiar portion and recompense of the meek. Unassuming, gentle and humble in their deportment, they give no offence, they create no enemies, they provoke no hostilities, and thus escape that large proportion of human misery which arises from dissensions and disputes." Jesus did not mean to promise great earthly riches, as other scriptures show, and also, as such a promise would be unsuited to the end. For the more one becomes meek and unworldly, the less he desires the "mammon of unrighteousness;" the less he values it as a reward. Of these worldly things, the Christian shall have enough. Our Lord promises a spiritual gift in these words —*power over others for good.* He knew that He founded this blessing on a deep, a vital truth of human nature, and He indicates to Christians, that the true way to gain a right influence over others, and to hold in check the passions of others, is to begin by *controlling our own.* We imagine that the meek are of course weak, but hear Solomon: "He that is slow to anger *is better than the mighty*, and he that *ruleth his spirit* than he that taketh a city. Prov. xvi. 32. Moses was "very meek above all men" (Num. xii. 3), yet for forty years he ruled successfully the wild tribes of Israel. Such as desire power to do good must begin with self-control, for they can never do good to others who cannot rule themselves. See Gal. vi. 1, 2; Eph. iv. 2; Tit. iii. 2; Jas. iii. 13.

6. *Hunger and thirst.* These well known appetites of the body are chosen to represent the strong desires which a Christian feels for the spiritual blessings, which alone satisfy the soul. This illustration is frequently used in the Gospel. Jesus answered the temptation of Satan to make bread of stones, "Thou shalt not live by bread, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." As bread satisfies the body, so do the promises of God sustain the spiritual life. He instituted the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, representing his broken body and blood spilled for us; by this symbol teaching us, that as our bodies are sustained by the bread and wine, so, after a heavenly and spiritual manner, our souls are therein nourished. John vi. 53–63. Again: He used the language of one thirsty, at the well of Samaria, to explain to the Samaritan woman, the Gospel that prevents man from ever thirsting again—that is, which so fully satisfies his soul, that he need never seek for more truth elsewhere. John iv. 14. *Fasting*, likewise, is a lesson derived from the same analogy,

7 Blessed *are* the merciful: for they[a] shall obtain mercy.

a Ps. 41. 1, 2.

8 Blessed *are* the pure[b] in heart: for they shall[c] see God.

b Ps. 24. 4; Jas. 1. 27. *c* Hab. 1. 13.

to teach us, that as at such times we experience the earnest desire for earthly food, so must we have an earnest, constant desire for the "sincere milk of the Word of God," whereby we may grow in grace. As the prodigal son perishing with hunger, so the sinner must flee to the pardoning love of God, with an intense desire for pardon. As the Israelites lived for forty years on the manna, so must the Christian seek his supplies from above. No one can look to God with true hunger and fail to be filled; here filled with all things necessary for the body, filled hereafter with more than the heart of man, in its wildest imaginations, has ever conceived. We must hunger for righteousness, i. e. true, entire obedience to the laws of God, perfect holiness of heart and life. See note v. 20; Ps. xlii. 1–5.

7. *The merciful.* The doctrine that *God will be merciful to us by the rule of our mercy to others*, is often taught in Scripture (Ps. xviii. 25–26; Matt. vii. 1; x. 42; xxv. 34, &c.), is repeated hourly on the lips of Christians in the Lord's Prayer (Matt. vi. 12), and is made *the test* of acceptance (Matt. xxv. 40) in the awful description of the last day. It becomes us, therefore, to lay it to heart. The merciful are they who are gentle and forgiving of the wrongs, as well as kind and pitiful to the woes of others; they who show a ready sympathy for human sorrows, and forbear much for the best good of others. See 1 Cor. xiii. 4–8; Jas. iii. 17. God hangs his pardon of us *conditionally*, on the spirit of forgiveness in us toward others. Matt. xviii. 32–35; Prov. xxi. 13; Mk. xi. 26; Jas. ii. 13. For a main part of true holiness is that we imitate and illustrate to others the divine mercy. We must be "partakers of the Divine nature" (2 Pet. i. 4), children of God in truth as well as in name, and especially in "the quality of mercy," by which he is chiefly known among men. Ex. xxxiv. 6. This same lesson is practically taught by the Church, which addresses *fit and worthy communicants* thus: "And if ye shall perceive your offences to be such as are not only against God but also against your neighbors, then ye shall reconcile yourselves unto them; being ready to make restitution and satisfaction, according to the uttermost of your powers, for all injuries and wrongs done by you to any other, and being likewise ready to *forgive others* who have offended you, *as ye hope for forgiveness at God's hand;* for otherwise the receiving of the holy communion doth nothing else but increase your condemnation." See also 2d Rubric of Communion Office. This duty is so powerfully enforced, that we cannot escape it. We must be of the right spirit to meet our Judge, saying, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these My disciples, *ye did it unto Me.*" Saith St. Augustine: "He pronounces those blessed who succor the wretched, because they are rewarded in being themselves delivered from all misery."—See Hymns 115–117.

8. *Pure in heart.* Says Bp. Beveridge: "The heart is pure which is sound in the faith, submissive to the will, obedient to the law, constant in the service, and zealous for the glory of God; which is meek, humble, just and charitable towards others; in short, that exercises itself to 'have always a conscience void of offence towards God and man.'" The Bishop seems to have in mind the various texts in which purity is enjoined.—1 Tim. iii. 9, iv. 12; 2 Tim. ii. 21; Tit. ii. 14; Heb. ix. 14, x. 27; Jas. i. 27; 1 Pet. i. 22; 2 Pet. i. 9. The hearers of Christ esteemed with superstitious reverence mere bodily purity. They were careful to go to the Temple with bodies washed with pure water, but forgot the greater need of having their "hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience," by repentance and amendment. Purity, which is here taught, is not only freedom from filthy

9 Blessed *are* the peace-makers: for they shall be called the children of God.

10 Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness sake:[a] for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[a] 1 Pet. 12. 19–25; 3. 14.

obscene thoughts, as we now often use the word, but is taken in that large sense given to it by Bishop Beveridge. ¶ *Shall see God.* The Jews believed that no man could see God and live; and it is certain that the wicked will never see him. Rev. i. 7. To see him is to enjoy His gracious presence here (Lu. x. 22), and to be admitted to His immediate presence hereafter. This blessing, and the two which follow, are in the manner of a climax. The poor shall see God, the peacemakers become His children; they that suffer persecution for Him here, are possessors of the kingdom of heaven, "great is their reward." These blessings began with the Church on earth, and end with the Church glorified in heaven.

9. *The peacemakers.* Those who are disposed to make peace and preserve it among men. They who soothe angry feelings in others, reconcile quarrels, prevent violence and lawsuits, keep a quiet, orderly neighborhood, are praiseworthy. But in a far higher sense must we make peace, to be called God's children. The highest peace is in the unity of the Christian Church. The peacemakers, those who promote peace at the centre by holding and extending the true faith. We must avoid dissension, headstrong self-will, heresy and schism, that we may have peace within. Thus we "*keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.*"—Eph. iv. 3, &c. "For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints."—1 Cor. xiv. 33. "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, *to the which ye are called in one body.*"—Col. iii. 15; Jas. ii. 18; Eph. vi. 15. ¶ *Called the children of God. To be called* with the Hebrews was often the same as *to be:* they shall be the children of God. Peacemakers will be esteemed among men as genuine Christians, truly moved by the Spirit, and acceptable to God. God will adopt them, and reward them with the blessing of eternal peace.

10. *Persecuted.* Afflicted, harassed or killed by wicked men for the sake of religion. There were many violent persecutions of the Church in the first ages. Acts viii. 1; xi. 19. Sometimes of particular persons. Acts xiii. 50; 2 Tim. iii. 11. The only persecution, if it can be called such, which now exists, is that of the tongue, in evil speaking, inventing abusive names, and exciting public odium against individuals, for the truth's sake. There are times of external peace, which we may enjoy and thank God. We need not adopt strange manners, nor utter harsh and obnoxious sentiments, in order to be disliked. 1 Pet. ii. 20. Sir Thos. More tells in his quaint style of certain men in his day, who could not think themselves Christians until they had set all men of sense against them by their vagaries, and rebellious practices. This is fanaticism, not piety. We must hold the truth, if in peace, with thanksgiving; if in trouble and enmity, still with thanks and patience. ¶ *Righteousness' sake.* Because of a righteous life, as Christians. This word in the Gospels means a holy life of faith and good works. If we are persecuted, it must be a matter of self-examination, whether it is for our own faults, or for the truth. If the latter, the kingdom of heaven is ours, in its comforts here, and its future rewards. 2 Cor. iv. 17. ¶ *The kingdom of heaven.* Evil men may rob the Christian of everything else, they cannot rob him of the consolation and joys of this kingdom, nor dim his faith that "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation." 2 Pet. ii. 9. These blessings begin and end with this one promise, this in which all the others result. Single graces are blessed, but not existing *alone.* Men differ in their reigning tempers; some are meek, some humble, some energetic as peace-makers, some peculiarly innocent and pure in heart, and these different graces

11 Blessed are ye when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you‖ falsely, for my sake.

‖ *lying.*

12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

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have different rewards. But every man must have all in some degree, though not the same. No single virtue can save us, if we are altogether wanting in the others. The blessings are also in a climbing scale, one begetting another. A man begins in penitence and humility for sin, adds to it patience and self-control, gains zeal, which hungers for pious deeds of righteousness, learns to forgive others, by the law of his own experience of pardon; then being pure in heart, he finds peace within, and promotes it without, and like an oak well rooted in the Rock of Ages, can bear any storm of affliction or persecution.

11. *Revile you.* Reproach falsely, with insulting and degrading names. Jesus was reviled, called a Samaritan, i. e., a mongrel heretic and schismatic, as having a devil, working by Beelzebub, &c., by the contemptuous malice of the Jews. They would be as harshly treated in their turn. ¶ *Persecute.* Drag you before kings and governors, as disobedient subjects. Acts iv. 21; vi. 12; xii. 1, 4; xxiv. 5. Most of the disciples who sat to hear these words, looking off to the still waters of Galilee, with dreams of an earthly kingdom, perished by the cruelty of wicked men; to find out how much more glorious was God's way than theirs. ¶ *All manner of evil falsely.* Two things are required in us, to receive this blessing. 1. Men must say evil *falsely*, as St. Peter shows. 1 Epis. ii. 20. A man must be a Christian and do well, and suffer for the well-doing, not for personal faults. Nothing is more injurious to religion, than to see men casting the blame of their own faults upon it. A minister, for instance, corrupts the Gospel, becomes a politician, or fanatic, indulges a morbid temper against men who differ from him, and then foolishly complains of the contempt which he deservedly meets, as a persecution against the godliness which he has caricatured. 2. It must be *for my sake*; evil charged for holding the true faith. When one firmly and humbly believes the doctrines which may be unpopular at any time, as the unity of the Church, the apostolic succession, &c., and is called by petty names, or his motives suspected, he should bear it with patience, and rejoice that puritan violence can go no farther. We meet now only the paltry persecution of tongues. Let us learn peace and patience in holding truth.

12. *Rejoice and be exceeding glad.* Neither wonder nor be cast down, but hail, welcome it, and recognize it as a blessing. It is a mystery of grace that the world knew little of, before Christ, that a man should rejoice at trouble. The Christian learns that all things work together for his good, and like Paul and Silas, finds no dungeon of adversity so dark and deep that he cannot "pray and sing praises to God." 1 Pet. i. 1, 6; Heb. xii. ¶ *The prophets.* The holy men of the ancient covenant. See the list of them, Heb. xi. The disciples were to bear the same relation to the new covenant, and must expect the same experience.

This chapter, to this verse, is the Gospel for All Saints day, Nov. 1st. It reminds us annually of that "communion and fellowship in the mystical body of Christ, in which God has knit together His chosen people, to the intent that we may continue steadfast in the church militant here on earth, and so be fitted to join forever the Church triumphant in heaven. To that end we must follow the blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living, that we may come to their unspeakable joys. And we bless God "for all those who have

13 ¶ Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

15 Neither do men light a can-

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departed this life in the faith and fear of Him, and give Him hearty thanks for the good examples of those His servants who, having finished their course in faith, do now rest from their labors." They are one with us, knit together in one body, from Abraham and Peter to the little child which died to-day. This is the faith they have followed.

> These through fiery trials trod,
> These from great afflictions came.
> *Hymn* 201.

13. *Salt of the earth.* The effect of salt is silently to preserve the purity of bodies and contend against the active tendencies of decay. It is necessary to animal life and health, and is wonderfully spread abroad over the earth and sea. The disciples were to preach that religion which alone could do this same work in the moral world. Christians, cast into the wicked and corrupt mass of the world, arrested its downward progress and did "dry up the humors of carnal works, remove the foulness and putrefaction of evil conversation, and kill the work of lustful thoughts, and also that worm of which it is said "their worm dieth not." ¶ *Hath lost its savor.* In our country salt is known only in its purest state, so that it cannot lose its savor without disappearing. But with the Jews it was very impure, and mixed with a whitish earth, which remained in the same form after the saltness had melted away. There is a valley of this mixed salt near Gelu, about four hours journey from Aleppo, in which is a precipice made by the crumbling of the salt. Maundrell the traveller says of it: "I took a piece of it, of which that part which was exposed to the rain and air, though it had the sparks and particles of salt, yet it had perfectly lost its savor. The inner part, which was connected with the rock, retained its savor." How fit an image of one who seems to be a saint, yet has within neither grace nor active power to do good to others. He is rejected by God, and despised by men.

14. *The light of the world.* The sun gives light to the physical world—Christ, to the spiritual. The disciples were to spread this latter light by their instructions. As the sun gives light to men, that they walk safely and work efficiently, so the knowledge of the divine will, communicated by the disciples, would illuminate the minds of men, to walk humbly before God, and to work out their salvation. John xi. 9; Phil. ii. 15. They could teach the ignorant, point out the great truths of a holy life, instruct them in its laws, and fill them with hopes of God's favor. ¶ *A city set on a hill.* True grace cannot be concealed. "Christians are God's building." 1 Cor. iii. 9; Eph. ii. 21. They are necessarily purer and holier than other men, and their virtues and graces must be visible, being as irrepressible as the light of day. Jerusalem, a type of the church, was built on a hill. The city Bethesda was situated on a hill, in full sight of the Mount of Beatitudes. Jesus may have pointed to it as a graceful illustration of his meaning. The gifts of grace exalt us, but give us new duties. To teach others well we must be pure and active—the salt of earth before we can be its light.

15. *Neither do men, &c.* As no one lights a candle to hide it, but that it may be of use, so did Christ instruct the disciples, that they might bear witness to Him, and give spiritual light to others. Jesus was to remain on earth for a short time only. His work was then to be carried on by His followers—His mystical body, acting for Him, until He comes again. Matt. ch. xxviii. 20; Eph. i. 23; Col. i. 24. This figure of light is frequently used in the Gospel of St. John. John i. 7–9. Christians now bear witness to that

dle, and put it under a‖ bushel, but on a candlestick: and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works,[a] and glorify[b] your Father which is in heaven.

17 ¶ Think not that I am come to destroy the[c] law, or the

‖ The word in the original signifieth, *a measure containing about a pint less than a peck.*

a Eph. 2. 10; 1 Tim. 6. 18; Tit. 2. 14; 3. 8. *b* 1 Pet. 12. 12. *c* Rom. 10. 4; Gal. 3. 21.

light, by suffering it to shine in their lives, in obedience to the Gospel. Piety shut up in profession only, is a light hidden. It shines out in good works, done in faith and godly sincerity. ¶ *Bushel. A modion*, a measure containing about one peck, one large enough to cover the light of a candle.

16. *Let your light so shine.* Not *make* it, but suffer it to shine. It is its nature to shine, to flow forth in mercy and truth Be humble and consistent Christians, and let the influence of your piety work out its own nature on others. How sweetly are we warned of our duty and place. The light of a candle throws out its beams, not to exalt itself, for it perishes in the act. The Christian is not to seek his own honor or gain, but to shine, as it were, because he cannot help it. Piety should flow forth as freely as light, as simply, as unconsciously as innocence from a child. It shines in the harmony of the whole character, by avoiding a cowardly surrender of truth, avoiding heresy aud false doctrine, selfishness and self-will, all of which discolor the purity of true godliness. ¶ *May see your good works.* This is the end of a pious life, not the motive: that is, we are not to do good works to be seen of men, ch. vi. 1–6, but in the fear of God, who will make this use of them to His own glory. We should be careful to do good works from love and obedience, unselfishly, from an honest and pure heart, and a right faith. We may pray God "to assist us with His grace, that we may continue in the fellowship of His faithful people, and *do all such good works* as He has prepared for us to walk in." "Albeit good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins and endure the severity of God's judgment; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known, as a tree discerned by its fruit." *Art. XII.* See Gal. vi. 10: James ii. 17; Heb. xiii. 16.

17. *To destroy, &c.* To set aside former truth. Christ came not to do away the revealed religion of the Jews, which was from God, and approved by Him in divers ways, but to enlarge it, and build upon it the superstructure which they knew was necessary to its perfection. It was wanting in two respects: 1. It was to be changed in its ceremonial, from "carnal ordinances" to a spiritual service. John iv. 24. 2. Jesus was to break down the wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles. Eph. ii. 14. The same elements of pure morality are found in both covenants. "Although the law, given from God by Moses, as touching ceremonies and rites, does not bind Christian men, nor the civil precepts thereof ought of necessity to be received in any commonwealth, yet, notwithstanding, no Christian man whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called moral." *Article VII.* ¶ *Law and the prophets.* The Hebrew division of the Old Testament was into the Law, or five books of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms, or as here, for brevity's sake. ¶ *To fulfil.* To verify and do all that they foreshadowed in types, symbols, or, in plain language, to supply their imperfections, provide a better covenant, and reveal life and immortality.

'Tis finished—all that heaven decreed,
And all the ancient prophets said
Is now fulfilled, as long designed,
In Me, the Saviour of mankind. *Hymn* 66.

prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one[a] tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men

[a] Lu. 16. 17.

18. *Verily.* In Greek *Amen.* A solemn affirmation. Truly. Indeed. Placed at the end of a prayer it signifies, as the Catechism has it, "Therefore, I say, Amen. So be it." 1 Kings i. 36. ¶ *Jot or tittle.* The Hebrew letter *yodh* was the smallest of their letters, the *keraia*, or tittle, the least point used in writing. The least fraction of the law will be fulfilled. No command is too small to be unobserved by the Almighty. The heaven and earth will be destroyed, for to this they are appointed, but it is impossible for one precept or type of the law to fail, since it was inspired by the wisdom and sustained by the power of God. The *ceremonial law* of the Mosaic system, which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings and carnal ordinances imposed on them *till the time of reformation* (Heb. ix. 10, 11), was fulfilled by Christ, the High Priest of a more perfect covenant. The *judicial law* of the Jews, which constituted and guarded them in their national life, as a separate and peculiar people, was completed and ended when Shiloh came to gather in the nations. Both these systems of law were only as a scaffolding, to be removed when the building was raised. All those portions of the Old Testament which do not come under these two classes, are called the *Moral Law*, and are held by Christians as *always binding.* It includes prominently the Ten Commandments, the compend of all laws; also, all the moral and spiritual precepts; all the apparitions and declarations of God; all revelations of His spiritual intentions in prophecies; all the examples and sayings of good men, such as the books of Psalms, Proverbs, &c., and all other spiritual precepts and influences, which are not evidently transient and Jewish in their nature, and which make one wise unto salvation. These are esteemed to be part and parcel of the *Moral Law*, which pervades the Old Testament, as warmth and life do the human body, and make it worthy the praises of the Psalmist. Psa. xix. 7–11; Matt. xxii. 37–40; Rom. xiii. 9. 10. This moral law can never pass. It must be kept by all, for all are sinners, to be pardoned only by the redemption of the Lord Jesus.

19. *Shall break.* It may allude to these laws of the Old Testament which Jesus now reinforces and explains; but it seems better, as St. Chrysostom says: "He says the least, not of the old laws, but of those which he was now going to enact." Our Lord here lays down *the system of Christian law—the Covenant of Grace.* Moses received the law for the Jews, Jesus now declares the conditions of salvation under the Gospel. This appears from two facts, among many: 1. No one of these commands can be violated without danger to the soul. Therefore, nothing short of them will suffice for salvation. They are the vital condition of salvation. 2nd ch. vii. 24–27. Jesus sums up His discourse by declaring that the only foundation of hope is, hearing *these sayings of His and doing them.* Otherwise the foundation is sandy and false. Setting aside the metaphor, the idea is, that obedience to the laws set down in these chapters is absolutely necessary to salvation. ¶ *Least in the kingdom of heaven.* Of little use or account here, of little reward hereafter. False, heretical teachers, who carve and separate and omit parts of the laws of God, are injurious to the Church and will be lightly esteemed by God and His people. The Pharisees are an example of this perverseness. Ch. xv. 3–9. St. James repeats this truth. Ch. ii. 10 11. St. Augustine being consulted by St. Jerome, concerning the meaning of these two passages, answered, that "the reason of it, why one

so, he shall be called the least[a] in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do, and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the *righteousness* of the

a Jas. 2. 10.

one who broke, and taught others to break, the least point of the law should be guilty of all, is, that he thereby despises the authority of the Giver of the law, and offends against that charity which is the spirit common to all its commands." ¶ *Be called great.* Shall be so esteemed. He that teaches the whole law, in every point, wisely and faithfully, is a "workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." 2 Tim. ii. 15.

20. *Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees.* Says Bp. Hall: "The poor Jews were so besotted with the admiration of these two, that they would have thought if but two men must go to heaven, the one should be a Scribe, the other a Pharisee. What strange news was this from Him that kept the keys of David, that neither of them should come there! It was not the person of these men, not their learning nor wit, not eloquence, not honor they admired so much, but their *righteousness:* and lo nothing but their righteousness is censured! Herein they seemed to exceed all men; herein all that would be saved must exceed them." Their righteousness was defective, 1, perverting the truth with false traditions, ch. xv. 3–12; 2, preferring external marks of devotion to integrity of mind, ch. xxiii. 25; 3, partial, compounding for sins by single acts of obedience, ch. xxiii. 23; 4, presumptuous and proud, Luke xviii. 12; 5, degraded by hypocrisy and cruelty, ch. xxiii. 14. It was a form of godliness without the power. It was the chief enemy of Jesus and prompted His death, and led to the ruin of the nation. Our Lord here speaks of it as a *righteousness*, not of its baser parts. The Christian must exceed it in all that was good in it, by actual holiness in thought, word and deed, living soberly, righteously and godly in this present life. ¶ *Kingdom of heaven.* See note ch. iii. 2. "Beautiful entrance He here makes to a teaching beyond the works of the Law; declaring to the apostles that they should have no admission to the kingdom of heaven without a righteousness beyond that of the Pharisees."—*S. Hillary,*

scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

21 ¶ Ye have heard that it was said[‖] by them of old time,[c] Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment:

b Matt. 23. 13–28. ‖ or, *to them.* *c* Ex. 20. 13; Deut. 5. 17.

21. *Ye have heard.* Jesus proceeds to instance certain kinds of the false teaching of the Pharisees. His hearers were familiar with them. They knew the law (Ex. xx. 13), and the *gloss* or explanation put upon it by the tradition of the elders, or learned teachers of their nation. They must feel at once the contrast of that gloss with the simple truth. ¶ *By them of old time.* Or as in the margin, *to them*, &c. The Greek word may have either sense, without altering much the meaning of the passage. *To* them, taught to those who lived before Christ by the doctors, or *by* them, that is by the doctors or rabbis. The Jewish rabbis taught as is here noted, by giving a text, and then adding an explanation of it. But they erred in many cases, and mystified, perverted or nullified the sense of scripture. Jesus does not cite this case from *Moses* as differing from him, but quotes both text and gloss from *them of old time*, or from the traditions of the rabbins. ¶ *Thou shalt not kill.* The rabbins seem to have explained this commandment, as *literally* forbidding only murder *with one's own hands.* If a man hired an assassin to do it, suffered a wild beast to do it, or in any way procured it, without his personal act, he

22 But I say unto you, That [a] whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, [‖] Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say,

[a] 1 John 3. 15.

[‖] That is, *vain fellow.*

was not punishable by the law—though they confessed that he might deserve punishment from God. ¶ *Danger of the judgment.* Murder was a capital crime. Numb. xxxv. 31. The cases of it were tried before inferior courts, sitting in the towns and villages, not by the Supreme Court of the Sanhedrim. The Pharisee emphasized the actual crime of murder, but said nothing of the cause of it, in sinful, ungovernable passions.

22. *But I say unto you.* I say by authority, as a lawgiver to be obeyed. He comments on the words of the rabbins with a voice, and application of right reason, such as never were heard before. The form of His teaching manifests supreme authority. He spake as He worked—royally and majestically; as one who thought it no robbery to be equal with the Giver of the former law. ¶ *Angry.* Anger without a cause or in excess is condemned, not a just indignation against wrong and wickedness. The passion is a part of our natural constitution, to prompt us to ward off danger and injury, with proper energy. As killing in self-defence, war, or in the execution of a judicial sentence, is not murder, so anger against those things or persons, which deserve it, is not of itself blameworthy. It must not run into violence, malice or revenge. See Mark iii. 5.; Eph. iv. 26. It is a matter for great watching and care, for the flame is too dangerous to burn often or long without harm. Anger without a cause, or to a degree of violence, evil speaking and hatred, leads to the most atrocious crimes and is hostile to the spirit of the Gospel. John iii. 15; iv. 20. ¶ *His brother.* His brother Jew, brother Christian, or brother man, for in this broad sense our religion has put the word. It is sufficient to give it the stricter sense of the Christian brotherhood, as these laws are meant for Christians especially. Jesus runs an analogy here between the punishment due to the degrees of unreasonable anger, and the common sentences of the Jewish courts. Causeless anger, which goes no farther, shall be in danger of *the judgment* of the inferior court of twenty-three members; if words of bitter railing are added to the passion, it shall deserve a sentence similar to that of murder, inflicted by the council, the Sanhedrim—but if to this there is joined the contemptuous treatment implied in the word *fool*, it shall become liable to a more grievous punishment, comparable only to that custom of burning alive in the valley of Hinnom. ¶ *Raca.* A Hebrew word, a term of contempt, "worthless, vain fellow." *Thou fool* signified one wanting in true wisdom, an apostate and rebel against God. It may seem difficult to account for these degrees of punishment following mere words; but in serious minds, —and the Jews were a serious people, —words are things. To call names and treat accordingly followed of course. These words imply a corresponding conduct. Raca, thou witless fool, and then came contempt. See 1 Cor. viii. 11; Lu. xvii. 1, 2. Then *moreh* or fool in a religious sense, and then treatment tending to destroy the soul of the offender. All degrees of anger are therefore to be condemned. ¶ *The council.* The Sanhedrim or Council of seventy-two. It was instituted in the time of the Maccabees, B. C. 200. It was composed of, 1. The High Priest who was President. 2. The Chief Priests, *i. e.* the Saga or deputy of the High Priest; such as may have been High Priests, and the heads of the twenty-four courses of Priests, as appointed by David. 3. The Princes of the tribes and those who were venerable for much learning. It was the supreme court, from whose sentence there was no appeal. The place of its session was in a

Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire.

23 Therefore, if thou bring thy [a]gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee,

[a] Matt. 8. 4; 23. 19.

building adjoining the temple. The lesser council was composed of twenty-three members, of whom seven were judges, as Josephus informs us. Jew. War. i. 20. 5. Antiq. iv. 8. 14. ¶ *Hell fire.* In Greek, *the Gehenna of fire.* This word *Hell*, originally meaning a deep dark place, inhabited by departed spirits good and bad, answering to the word Sheol in Hebrew and Hades in Greek, is here used *for the first time* in the Bible as *the place of punishment.* It is from the Saxon verb *helan*, to cover, and signifies simply a covered place or the abyss of the grave. This was the common meaning in the old English. It is the meaning in the Old Testament. Ps. xvi. 10. It is there *sheol*, the grave, or hell, *i. e.* the place of the spirits of the dead. So the creed explains "He descended into Hell—He went into *the place of departed spirits.*" This is the sense of the word in the Old Testament. Eternal life and eternal death are clearly revealed only in the New Testament—sound theology teaches us:

> "The Font of Love, His servants sends to tell
> Love's deeds: *Himself reveals the sinner's hell.*"

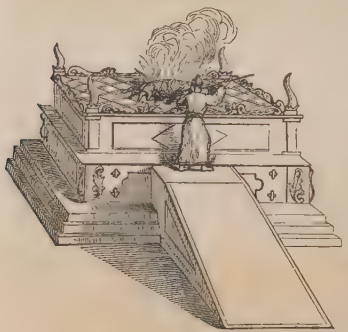
The word hell translates Gehenna, a *place of future torment*, twelve times in the New Testament. Matt. v. 22, 29, 30; x. 28; xviii. 9; xxiii. 15, 33; Mark ix. 43, 45, 47; Lu. xii. 5; James iii. 6; once *Tartarus*, 2 Pet. ii. 4. It is used eleven other times in the New Testament to translate *Hades*, the place of departed souls. Matt. xi. 23; xvi. 18; Lu. x. 15; xvi. 23; Acts ii. 27-31; 1 Cor. xv. 55; Rev. i. 18; vi. 8; xx. 13, 14. Then says St. John, "death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is *the second death.*" Hell is here plainly distinguished from the place of torment. The Hebrew word *Gehenna* has its own history. It is made of two words Ge-Hinnom—the land or valley of Hinnom. Josh. xviii. 16. St. Jerome speaks of it as a beautiful spot at the foot of Mount Moriah, south of the temple, watered by the fountain of Siloam. It is a deep dell or ravine, surrounded by precipitous hills. It was the scene of the horrid worship by the people of the idol Moloch, the abomination of the Ammonites. Mothers offered their infants in sacrifice to this monster, fastening them to its brazen lap to be burned to death. 2. Chron. xxviii. 3. Drums (Heb. *Tophim*) were used to drown their cries, whence came the name Tophet. Jer. xix. 11–13. The place was at length defiled by Josiah (2 Kings xxiii. 10) in order to prevent these rites. It became the receptacle of the filth and offal of the city, that it might be further polluted. Jer. vii. 32, 33. This in time produced noxious malaria, and it was found necessary to keep fires burning continually in the valley, to perserve the health of the city. What a comment does the imagination now perceive in this word Gehenna, Hell—a scene that defies description—"their *worm dieth not*, and the fire is not quenched." Providence thus prepared through several ages this fearful symbol and type of future punishment, against the time when the Son of man, revealing the truths of life and immortality, should also teach in all its horrors, the contrast to them—*the second death.*

23. *Therefore, &c.* Seeing there is this danger, learn first of all to love your brethren. The highest act of public worship with the Jew was to offer sacrifice to Jehovah. For this purpose he went up to Jerusalem. And the Pharisees taught them to do this, to the neglect of the charities of life. Now, says our Lord, if you are at the altar's foot, and remember this offence, go back and learn that God "will have mercy, and not sacrifice"—rather than sacrifice and not mercy. Ps. li. 16.

24 Leave there thy gift before the[a] altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

a 1 Tim. 2. 8.

1 Sam. xv. 22. The Church now gives her members the same warning. The Minister exhorts all who would come to the Holy Communion, "if any of you *be in malice* or envy, &c., repent ye of your sins, or come not to that holy table." And it is made his duty by the rubric "if he perceive malice or hatred to reign between any persons, he shall advertise them that they presume not to come to the Lord's table, until they be reconciled. And if one of the parties so at variance be content to forgive him from the bottom of his heart, all that the other hath trespassed against him, and to make amends for that wherein he himself hath offended; and the other party will not be persuaded to a godly unity, but remains still in his frowardness and malice; the Minister in that case ought to admit the penitent person to the Holy Communion, and not him that is obstinate." ¶ *Thy gift.* Thy offering, sacrifices or presents. Deut.



Altar of Solomon's Temple.

xvi. 16. ¶ *The altar.* The altar of burnt-offerings, stood before the porch on the east front of the Temple. It was the only place where the Jews could offer sacrifices to the Lord. They joined in public prayer and praise in the synagogues, which were to be found in every village. But it was only at this one altar that they met Jehovah in the sacred rite of sacrifice. Yet in this their most solemn rite, He would rather brook delay, than accept the service of the lips or hands, while the heart was filled with anger or malice. ¶ *Hath aught.* Has any just ground to complain of thee. "Pure religion (pure religious worship of God) is to visit the widow and the fatherless, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." ¶ *Leave then*, &c. God will wait, rather than be worshipped by one who has willingly injured his brother. The gift is to be left, as already given in intention, and cannot be reclaimed. This language is to teach us that God is pleased with the spirit of love and obedience in His children. ¶ *Be reconciled.* Be earnest to make peace, restitution if necessary, so as to worship God with a clear conscience. There is a limit to this law, since, when others will not make peace, we are to be satisfied with having made proper efforts for it. Thus has Jesus laid down the law of love, as an integral element of the covenant of His Church.

25 Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary[b] deliver thee to the

b Prov. 25. 8; Lu. 12. 58, 59.

25, 26. *Agree with thine adversary quickly.* With the plaintiff or creditor. *In the way*, is on the way to the presence of the Judge. Christians must seek to give satisfaction to every one, even as one who at the very last, who is on the way to a trial, in which he may be the winner, does yet, in a spirit of kindness and forbearance, stop his opponent and reconcile their difference. This precept, as that of St. Paul (1 Cor. vi. 6–7) does not forbid Christians from obtaining redress from civil courts for outrageous injuries, it forbids them from being litigious and obstinate. The adversary, if he make his case good, delivers you to the judge, the judge sentences you to the power of the officer or sheriff, and he must hold you in durance until you pay the last farthing of the debt. For so just and stern is that human law to which you appeal; it knows no pardon.

judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

27 ¶ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time,[a] Thou shalt not commit adultery:

28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh[b] on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

a Ex. 20. 14.

29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

30 And if thy right hand‖ offend thee, cut it off, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into ‖hell.[c]

b Job 31. 1; Prov. 6. 25. ‖ or, *do cause thee to offend.* ‖ or, *Gehenna.* *c* Rom. 5. 13.

All this seems to be an analogy of God's manner of dealing with the harsh and oppressive Christian, who will not forgive his brother his offences. Ch. xviii. 32–35. We must be ruled by that law of mercy, which we need for our offences, lest we fall by having the measure that we mete returned to us. Thus far Jesus comments on the sixth commandment, which implies forgiveness of others, restitution for wrongs, and an active desire to prevent any just complaint. To be wise in this we must begin by restraining the native passion of anger from all excess, by prayer and watchfulness. ¶ *Farthing.* Equal to about half a cent of our money.

27–28. *Thou shalt not,* &c. The seventh commandment. Probably the Jewish doctors had erred, for the Jews were peculiarly guilty in this sin. Jesus goes to the root of the matter, and extirpates in its beginning. *A roving eye* inflames a passion, which rages into a huge fire to ruin body and soul. 2 Sam. xi.; 2 Pet. ii. 14. Let the young keep their bodies "in soberness, temperance and chastity," make a covenant with their eyes, and in an evil generation dare to be pure, refuse to be led into scenes of temptation, avoid idleness, excess and luxury, and earnestly pray God to protect them in innocence. Scorn the tempter who by one foul word, or impure imagination, would lead you astray, Modest women should remember to shun every article and fashion of dress of an immodest character. 1 Tim. ii. 9–10. The saddest wail of the Old Testament is the fifty-first Psalm, the grievings of a broken heart, brought low by the consequences of one lustful look. "Be earnest and frequent in prayer; and if thou sometimes joinest fasting with thy prayers, they will be shot up to heaven with a cleaner strength; for the sin of uncleanness is one of those devils that 'goes not out but by fasting and prayer.' God is a God of purity; instantly beg of Him that He would send down His pure and chaste Spirit into thy heart, to cleanse thy thoughts and thy affections from all unclean desires. Beg that the Holy Ghost would but once touch thy heart with the sense of His eternal love; that He would diffuse such a celestial flame through thy soul as may ravish it with a heavenly zeal and ardor, and make it scorn to stoop to the ignoble love of poor inferior objects; represent to Him that thy body is His temple and thy heart His altar in it; and desire of Him that no strange, unhallowed fire may flame on His altar."—*Bp. Ezek. Hopkins.*

29–30. *Thy right eye.* The right eye or right hand is most useful to us. To lose either is a great misfortune. But no self-discipline is to be avoided by the Christian, in order to conquer the world,

31 It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:[a]

32 But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery.[b]

33 ¶ Again, ye have heard that

a Deut. 24. 1; Mark 10. 2–9.

b Matt. 19. 9; 1 Cor. 7. 10, 11.

the flesh and the devil. 1. It would be better to do this literally, than by indulging the heart in sin go to hell by this right eye or hand. 2. We are not to do this literally, because these members are not the causes of sin, which begins in the heart (Jas. i. 14), but we are, at any pain or cost, to rid ourselves of the incitements of the passions and to preserve purity. The poor drunkard was wise, who begged to be shut up in prison, till he could gain courage from reflection, to conquer his besetting sin. No discipline is to be feared, which is rationally suited to repress and remove this forbidden passion. ¶ *To offend.* To cause thee to stumble, as if the law were a stumbling-block. The English words, scandal and scandalize, are derived from this Greek word. ¶ *Cast into hell.* The bodies and souls of the wicked will be united at the resurrection and cast into "the lake of fire." Rev. xx. 14. Neither are there, until both are. In Luke xvi. 23, the word *hell*, in which the rich man was, is not the place of eternal torment, but Hades, the place of spirits. The punishment of sinners begins at death in horrors of conscience and a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, and is completed with the sentence, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." What is the agony of that final torment no tongue of man can describe.

31. *It hath been said.* By Moses. Deut. xxiv. 1, 2. This liberty was granted to a rebellious and sensual people in the times of their ignorance, in order to prevent other and worse crimes. ¶ *A bill of divorcement.* A Jewish husband was allowed to put away his wife, for certain reasons, by giving her a writing stating, that having been his wife, she was no longer bound to him. They had stretched this privilege to an abuse, and being judges in their own cases, had been unjust and wicked. The prophets Malachi and Micah rebuked them for this temper. Mal. ii. 15; Mic. ii. 9. Our Lord has suffered a single reason or cause of divorce to Christians, and shown a care for the weaker party. No set of men, legislature or congress can rightfully give divorce for any other reason. If they do so, they cease to be Christians. None who are divorced for other reasons are to be otherwise esteemed than as here described. If again married, they "being married otherwise than as God's law does allow, their marriage is not lawful." Marriage was ordained by God for the union of one of each sex. Ch. xix. 4. It is not a sacrament, much less a mere *legal institution*, as infidels regard it, but a solemn ordinance of God, fixed on the irreversible laws of nature. There are no sins more ruinous to society than sins against this rite. No practice, perhaps, so depraves the public opinion in regard to it, as the permission of marriage by the officers of the law. If it need no blessing from the ministers of religion, it becomes no ceremony of religion; and if not religious, then it is merely legal, and therefore to be changed and altered as the laws of men may be varied.

33. *Not forswear thyself.* See Lev. xix. 12. To forswear oneself is to fail to do that which one has promised on oath to do, i. e., by calling on God to punish him if he failed. Instances of oaths are found in the Old Testament. Gen. xxviii. 20; Ex. xxii. 12; Jud. xi. 30, 31. They were allowed, being a more sacred sort of promise, Ps. xv. 4; a sort of prayer to God to punish the violator of the oath. The Jews had abused this custom, 1, *by profaneness*,

it hath been said by them of old time,[a] Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

a Lev. 19. 12; Numb. 30. 2.

34 But I say unto you, Swear not[b] at all: neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:

35 Nor by the earth; for it is

b Matt. 23. 16–22; Jas. 5. 12.

introducing oaths into common conversation. 2, by making a pestilent distinction between oaths, to deceive others. A Jew made use of certain oaths, meaning to break them, while other forms he held to be binding. Thus the Latin poet, Martial, speaking to a Jew who denied a crime, "You deny it, and swear by the temple of the Thunderer (Jupiter.) I do not credit you. Swear, Jew, by the Most High God." This doctrine of *mental reserve*, and swearing by rule and distinction, ruins public faith and degrades a people. The third commandment forbids perjury. "Thou shalt not "put the name of the Lord thy God to a vanity or falsehood;" i.e., make a false vow. It forbids perjury and all profane swearing.

34, 35. *Swear not at all.* In these and other evil ways. The life of the Christian must be trustworthy, so that his communication, if only yea, and nay, will be credited. Unless a man lives in strict regard for truth, his swearing will hardly procure belief in his words. Jas. v. 12. This injunction is to be interpreted by a sound discretion, or we will run into perplexity and fanaticism. St. Paul hesitated not to adjure God to witness solemn assertions of his in certain cases. Rom. i. 9; 2 Cor. i. 23; xi. 31; Gal. i. 20; Phil. i. 8. Oaths required by courts of justice do not go beyond this practice of the apostle. "As we confess that vain and rash swearing is forbidden Christian men by our Lord Jesus Christ and *James* His apostle; so we judge that the Christian religion doth not prohibit, but that a man may swear when the magistrate requires it, in a cause of faith and charity, so it be done according to the prophet's teaching, in justice, judgment and truth." *Art. XXXIX.* See Jer. iv. 2. ¶ *Nor by the earth.* These are specimens of the false distinctions which had been invented; that a man should observe only vows made to God, and disregard others. Ch. xxiii. 16–20. To swear by any possession of God, is to call on Him to punish the vowing of a false oath. ¶ *Of the Great King.* Jerusalem; which belongeth to the King of Kings, the Lord. 1 Tim. vi. 15. To swear by it, was to invoke its ruler and God.

36, 37. *By thy head.* A common oath. They meant by it, that they put their heads into the power of the person for whose benefit the oath was made. But this was wrong; we have not power over the head to make a single hair grow otherwise than as He wills it to grow; and by inference we have not so great a right in it as He has, and cannot pawn to another that which is His property. ¶ *Your communication.* Your conversation, manner of speech. ¶ *Yea, yea, nay, nay.* Let your conversation with men be so truthful that your words of simple affirmation will be received. It would be affected for a Christian to adopt this style of speech, as if the merit of honesty lay in these words. He would be ridiculous, and might find it tending to prevent that very confidence in him, which the use of common language would have given him. ¶ *Cometh of evil.* The word may mean of the evil heart, or of the evil one, the devil. Evil is the work of the devil, prompting the evil of the heart. *Profane swearing* is fearfully common with the men and boys of our country. We may reflect then; 1. That all such cursing is in direct disobedience to God. It is a hateful sin, a mere damning oneself in wantonness. 2. It is no excuse to say that one does not mean any thing by it, or cannot help it. God forbids it, and will mean something when He punishes the man who has so often called on Him to do it. 3. Many fanciful exclamations are signs of this evil. Gad, Geds'blood, and the

his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King:

36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever *is* more than these cometh of evil.

38 ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said,[a] An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.

39 But I say unto you, that ye

[a] Ex. 21. 24; Lev. 24. 20; Deut. 19. 21.

like, are only preparative to this habit. 4. The causes of this national profanity seem to be at present, the loss among us, as a people, of reverence for the distinctive marks of a Christian gentleman. Many swear, not to *seem proud* or *peculiar*. It is a free and easy habit, a descent to vulgarity, which too many make, whose sense should disgust them with such a degradation. We must again reverence the refinement and manners of gentlemen, and teach boys to scorn to assume vulgar habits to please others. But the main cause of this national trait is, that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh;" we are a profane people, in wanting reverence for holy things. We have ceased to regard reverently the ordinances of God, the houses of His worship, the Scriptures and offices of law and religion. Sacred things are degraded by sectarian disputes and careless, unlearned teachers. We have fled from superstition, till religion itself has little hold upon us. To correct profaneness in speech, we must begin with it in the heart. Christians must again be marked for a deep, rational, constant reverence for sacred things, before the devastating tide of corruption will be checked.

38. *An eye for an eye.* The law of retaliation by which the Jewish judges or magistrates were to assign to an injurious person a punishment equal to his injurious actions, is found Ex. xxi. 24; Lev. xxiv. 20; Deut. xix. 21. It was purely a Judaic law, of stern Mosaic justice, ordained in accordance with the spirit or that polity. It had been corrupted. The Jew took justice into his own hands instead of referring it to the laws. Like the modern duellist, he would be the judge or executioner in his own case. Jesus reverses the law, as liable to abuse and inconsistent with the spirit of His gospel. The laws of Christian states still aim at exact justice between man and man, but are tempered by a spirit of mercy. The individual now in Christian lands has no such plea as the Jew had for the dangerous custom of retaliation. The *law of honor* is a savage legislation, at which even a Jew would have been ashamed and shocked. It is a blot and disgrace in any society. ¶ *Resist not evil.* This rule is not to be pressed to unreasonable extremes, as if we are bound by it to submit to every insult and injury which can be offered us, without complaint or resistance. Common sense requires that we regard this injunction in connexion with the examples and precepts of the whole Bible, as well as the common laws of human reason and society. It is couched in general terms, to impress on us the importance of a spirit of patience, moderation and forbearance, such as becomes the follower of Jesus; a desire to seek peace with all men. The example of Jesus in His last suffering is to be urged only upon martyrs; for then he acted under immediate inspiration, was in the hands of magistrates, and knew that His hour had come. At other times He rescued Himself from danger by supernatural means. Luke iv. 30; John viii. 59; x. 39. His followers not having this resource, are left to natural means of defence, which they may properly use, even to extremity. Our families, property, and persons, and, in a broader circle, our country, are all to be protected by us, if need be, with a strong hand. And if in some cases it is necessary to save them by killing the assailant, we are doing only that duty which results from the natural law and right of self-defence. "But here, (because all

"resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloak also.

41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

a Lu. 6. 29; Rom. 12, 17; 1 Cor. 6, 7.

cases of blood are tender) let me caution you, that it is not enough the danger be impending, but it must be *instant and present*, such wherein a man's life is in all probability lost if he doth not stand on his defence; for in dangers that are only threatened and approaching we ought to trust to Providence, and to use our best ability to work our escape from them. But if the assault be sudden and no way of escape visible, we may lawfully take away the life of him who unjustly seeks to take ours; for this is not a design to kill him, but to preserve ourselves."—*Bp Ezek. Hopkins.*

39–41. *Smite thee on thy right cheek. To give the cheek* was a proverbial expression among the Romans, signifying a willingness to bear an insult. To take the coat or cloak may have had some such meaning with the Jews, and to compel one to go a mile on public business was an Eastern custom. 1. The first is a *petty insult*, not great wrongs, of which nothing is here said. These insults the Christian should bear with an enlarged, patient spirit, not showing eagerness to strike back and take revenge for every trifle. 2. The second case is a precept in relation to lawsuits. We should be willing to give up trifling ordinary rights rather than be anxious to grasp and hold everything which strict law would allow. The coat was an inner robe, fitting rather closely, with sleeves. The cloak was a wide, nearly square garment, worn loosely over the former, and generally of more value. If any one was disputatious, and could lay claim to one of these garments, it were better to give up both than stand on so small a matter and appear litigious. Raiment could not be retained from the owner more than one day, by the law of Moses. Ex. xxii. 26, 27. 3. The third instance forbids the *insubordinate* spirit, which resists every exaction of the "powers that be." To compel one to go a mile was a purely Eastern phrase, derived from a custom introduced by Cyrus, the Persian king. He was the first to establish relays of horses on the great routes of his empire, and to enact laws by which to obtain the greatest despatch in his communication with the remote parts of the kingdom. His express messengers were allowed to press men, horses, boats, &c., to expedite their journeys. Any one could be compelled to be an *angaros*, or messenger for the time. This custom would at times be oppressive to individuals: but Jesus bids His hearers rather to submit, and do more than necessary, than to be rebellious against the laws. We are to apply this rule to our own circumstances. It is better to bear patiently little inequalities of the law of the land, and to show a generous obedience, than to be restless and turbulent. Rom. viii. 1 6; Titus iii. 1. ¶ *A mile.* A Roman mile was 1000 paces, estimated at 1611 yards.

42. *Give to him that asketh thee.* Great promises are made to charity, or almsgiving. 1 Tim. vi. 17-19; Gal. vi. 10. Noble examples are recorded of it; Lu. xix. 8; Acts x. It is made important to us, as being a duty preparatory to the due reception of the Holy Communion. The rich who are able, are to be earnestly exhorted to be liberal to the poor. *See Prayer Book.* The Christian who would give alms, must be sure—1. That he is able to give. He must *own* that from which he gives. See 2 Cor. viii. 21; Rom. xiii. 8. 2. He must not injure his family, who have a right to a due support from his goods. 1 Tim. v. 8. This direction of our Lord is in general terms, and must be explained by the laws of sound reason. "If any will not work," says St. Paul, "neither may he eat." 2 Thess. iii. 10. Idle, vagabond persons are

42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away.

43 ¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love[a] thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy:

44 But I say unto you, [b]Love your enemies,[c] bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and[d] pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven:

a Lev. 19. 18. *b* Lu. 6. 27. *c* Prov. 25. 21, 22. *d* Lu. 23. 34; Acts 7. 60.

charitably treated, when they are apprehended and made to work. Our alms should be guided by a generous prudence: 1. Search and find if the beggar is worthy. A walk in such a quest is often instructive. 2. Give rather by cool judgment, than hasty sympathy. 3. Give a portion of your alms in Church, as an offering to God, that it may come to the poor as the droppings of the sanctuary. 4. Divide a part amongst works of public charity, missions, asylums, hospitals. 5. Give a part in person, with acts of nursing the sick poor, teaching the ignorant, when possible. Such works of sympathy often sink deeper into the troubled spirits of the poor, than all your pelf. 6. Be not over-anxious how every gift may go. If deceived at times, know, it is better to give to an idler than to turn away by over-strictness a follower of Jesus. Jas. ii. 14-17. ¶ *Would borrow.* This too is a kind of charity; mere worldly business is not; but when we can help one by such favors, we are to do so. Often mere worldly men may shame over-rigid believers in this respect. Let a generous discretion be the rule, not lending to all who may ask, but willing to hear all, turning a kind ear to them, compassionating their difficulties, and as we can, relieving them.

43. *Ye have heard, &c.* Our Lord exposes a corruption of the Law of Moses, which commanded the Israelites to love "The children of thy people," *i. e.*, their own tribes. Lev. xix. 18. They inferred that they might hate others. They became notorious for this hatred of other nations. Moses left them without excuse. Lev. xix. 34. They were to hate idolatries, but not the persons of other nations. The Gospel transcends the law, in bidding us "do good unto all men, and especially unto those of the household of faith." Gal. vi. 10.

44. *Love your enemies.* It is not commanded to do this with the same kind or degree of affection, which we have for our friends. This is impossible. God loves all His creatures, and gives all the common blessings of His providence, but He does not love the bad and the good alike. "He is angry with the wicked every day." Ps. vii. 11. He is "nigh unto all them that call upon Him; to all that call upon Him in truth." Ps. cxlv. 18, &c; 1 John iv. 19. Christians must do good to all men, even their enemies, by praying for them, not repining at their prosperity, holding them in such kindliness, that they will freely assist their temporal, or pray for their eternal good. They are not to aim at having the same warmth of feeling for strangers, heretics or infidels, that they have for friends and believers. Jesus as man, cherished natural affections. He had a beloved disciple among the twelve, and loved the twelve with a particular regard. John xiii. 1. ¶ *Bless them that curse you.* Speak gently and kindly in remonstrating with even the outrageous and profane, rather than imitate their wickedness. The Litany bids us pray "that it may please God to forgive our enemies, persecutors and slanderers, and to turn their hearts." Another prayer reads "Reward all those who have done us good, and pardon all those who have done or wish us evil, and give them repentance and better minds." See Lu. xxiii. 34. ¶ *Despitefully.* Who with rancor seek to injure

for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.[a]

46 [b]For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others*? do not even the publicans so?

48 Be ye[c] therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

a Rom. 12. 19-21. *b* Lu. 6. 32.

c Gen. 17. 1; Lev. 19. 2; Jas. 1. 4; 1 Pet. 1. 15.

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us. It is the hardest lesson of the Christian discipline, for man to learn this gentle, celestial wisdom. The disciples often failed. Lu. ix. 54. Mat. xxvi. 51. ¶ *Persecute.* See ver. 10.

45. *That ye may be children.* Children of God are those who are in covenant with Him, and adopted by Him, and shew forth in a holy life the Spirit which He gives them. They have a likeness to the divine nature, and are known by it, even as children of earthly parents show their ancestral traits. Eph. v. 1. In contrast, Judas is called "the son of perdition," Elymas "the child of the devil," and wicked men "the children of this world." They shew the temper and character that manifests who has the greatest influence with them.

46. *What reward have ye?* The question leaves each to draw the conclusion for himself, that the Christian grace is something unworldly, whose perfect example is found only in the example of the Son of God. The cheap virtue of loving those who love us, is not to be put on the same footing. ¶ *Publicans.* Ancient governments were harsh and despotic. The modern name of *tax-gatherer* gives us little idea of the true position of this class. After the Romans had conquered a nation, they imposed a heavy annual tribute upon it. This was collected by underlings, who, in collecting it, often extorted as much more, on their own account. They spied out all that could be taxed, and were unjust, merciless and avaricious. Matthew and Zaccheus were favorable specimens, but uncommon. The Jewish Publican was detested by the nation, not merely for the collecting of this tribute, which was a mark of national degradation, but as *defiled* by mingling with pagans, and as traitors to the Law of Moses. There is no English word to express the infinity of bitterness, hatred and contempt with which the Jews regarded the Publicans. It was a part of their religion to detest them.

47. *If ye salute, &c.* To salute is to greet every one with kind wishes, or to use gestures of reverence toward them. The Jews conscientiously avoided, when it was possible, saluting any but their own people. They scorned all Gentiles. Their salutations to each other were gracious. In this easy virtue there are always proficients. A Chesterfield is not of course a Christian. It is our duty to use these innocent customs of civility and politeness, not from mere selfishness, but rather as a fruit of that benevolence to all men which makes our courtesy, graceful and *gracious.* 1 Pet. iii. 8.

48. *Be ye therefore perfect.* In strictness of speech this is impossible. We cannot equal any divine perfection. We may therefore regard it in two ways. 1. The Greek word *perfect,* means complete, entire, exactly proportioned to its uses and ends. It is used, Phil. iii. 15, 2 Tim. iii. 17, &c. of Christians, as complete in all things required in a consistent member of the Church. They are not sinless. So to aim at the perfection of God, is our duty. As He is perfect in a supreme sphere, we may endeavor to attain completeness, that "beauty of holiness" which will fit us for our sphere. A fruit and proof of it is this love for all men. Phil. iii. 15–17, 1 Pet. v. 10;

CHAPTER VI.

TAKE heed that ye do not your alms‖ before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

2 Therefore, when thou doest *thine* alms,‖ do not sound a trum-

‖ or, *righteousness.* ‖ or, *with.*

‖ or, *cause not a trumpet to be sounded.*

2 Or, we may, as the learned explain it, regard this precept as directing our conduct in respect of our loving our enemies, as a conclusion from verse 45th. Says Bp. Porteus: "In your conduct toward your enemies, approach as near as you can to that perfection of mercy, which your heavenly Father manifests towards His enemies; toward the evil and the unjust, on whom He makes His sun to rise as well as on the righteous and the just."

CHAPTER VI.

1. In the last chapter our Lord spake of righteousness in general. He now pursues it through its various parts. He made its general obligations more close and spiritual, and now directs His hearers in the Christian mode of fulfilling the law in respect to its promises and privileges. Earthly good is found in two things, fame or good report and wealth. Jesus substitutes for human praise, His own approval, and for worldly wealth, a trust in Providence for daily bread. These are to be the marks of His disciples. He gives in this chapter the three great practical laws of Christian life, *alms, prayer, and a trust in God.*

1. *Take heed.* Be careful to act from right motives. We do not now sound trumpets of brass when about to do religious acts, but we need still to be careful to avoid seeking *notoriety* and human praise. There is always a *fashion* in these things, and some give alms in subscription lists, not to *seem* close or singular; and not from right motives. ¶ *Alms.* In old English *Almose*, or *Alimosine* from the Greek word. It is a good deed done to those we pity; goods or moneys given to the poor, privately or in public worship, as at the Holy Communion. Privately done it is blessed. See Col. iii. 17. 1 Cor. x. 31. 1 Pet. iv. 9, 10. We should give in Church, as St. Paul recommends. 1 Cor. xvi. 2. It aids the usefulness of the Church, when besides giving sound doctrine, she can abound in works of mercy.

2. *Sound a trumpet.* This absurd custom seems to have been practised among the Jews. It seems ridiculous to us, but we must bear in mind, that God looks through all customs of society, to see the motives of the heart, and approves, not the custom so much as the intention. ¶ *Hypocrites.* Those who *act a part*, or whose *faces are masked.* The word was taken from the stage. In Scripture it signifies one who pretends to be very pious or virtuous, for false or selfish ends. The Pharisees were examples of this vice. ¶ *In the Synagogues.* Note iv. 33. In the public assemblies of people, in the house or streets. It seems to have been a proverbial expression, to signify a show of virtue. ¶ *They have their reward.* The rewards of true religion are mostly future. Here it gives only foretastes and reminders. But false piety is begun and ended *here.* The hypocrite is seen of men, passes for a pious man, but finds no favor with the Judge of men hereafter. Christians are sometimes troubled with scruples, and strive unduly to conceal their alms deeds. But the rule is spiritual and simple. The safe ground is—do them not, merely to be seen of men. If we are seen it matters not, if our hearts are right. Says St. Chrysostom, "If an idle thought seeking to be seen of men, mount up in any one's heart, but is resisted by the understanding spirit, he is not therefore to be condemned of man-pleasing: for that the thought came to him was the passion of the flesh, *but that which he chose* was the purpose of his soul."

3. *Let not thy left hand &c.* This was a proverb or highly figurative expression to signify the secresy which

pet before thee, as the hypocrites do, in the synagogues, and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth;

4 That thine alms may be in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, himself shall[a] reward thee openly.

a Lu. 8. 17; 14. 14.

5 ¶ And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites *are*: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet,[b] and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret;

b 2 Kings 4. 33; Dan. 6. 10.

modest humble piety seeks. It represents one hand boasting to the other of its deeds. But may there not be right hands now, that have no reason to exult? The Christian must *do* works of mercy. He need not affect secresy, but should avoid ostentation, being simple and honest in doing good works, nor too much troubled at being seen. A good man must often do good works in a public way. He does them as good, not as public. If one resolves to hide his light, he fails to glorify his heavenly Father. A golden mean is to be desired, in doing good. ¶ *Reward thee openly.* Certain rewards follow piety on this earth. 1 Tim. iv. 8. Its chief reward is openly given in the day of Judgment. Our "deeds done in the body," with a right faith and simple love, will receive every one a recompence of reward. A part of our recompence is that very thing which we are forbidden here. 1 Pet. i. 7. The desire of being thought well of, is a natural passion. Piety regulates, but does not extinguish it.

5. *To pray standing, &c.* These distinctions, as Bp. Porteus remarks, concern *private* prayer. They do not relate to public worship, for that must be in common, but condemn only, a bold parade of private devotions, over and above the public worship of others. Says the Jerusalem Talmud: "I observed Rabbi Janai standing and praying in the corner of the street Trippor, and repeating an additional prayer at each of the four corners." Jesus did not either prescribe or condemn public forms of prayer in these verses. He and His disciples used the Jewish Liturgy. Lu. iv. 16. We yet need this caution to avoid a spirit which leads to shows of devotion. We should conform to the rules and customs prescribed by the Church, in all sincerity, not violating propriety by a trifling manner, nor affecting singularity and superior devoutness. We may bow in the creed at the name of Jesus, but need not bow to the floor; we may be deeply moved with penitence in the Lord's supper, but not to the disturbance of others. In public worship all things are to be done decently and in order; in private, as our own discretion may decide.

6. *But thou, &c.* Be thou of a different spirit in private prayer, for as it is to God alone that thou prayest, it is well to guard the mind from all objects that can distract it from Him. ¶ *Thy closet.* Any private room. The roof in a house of Jerusalem, was flat and in many cases secluded from observation by high walls. See Acts x. 9. There was in most houses a small room over the entrance, where one could retire. Convenient places for prayer are easily had, when there is a heart to pray. ¶ *Seeth in secret.* God is invisible and everywhere present to us. He may be said to see in secret, for men have found Him in troubles and desertion, when only God could see them. Hagar found Him in the desert.

and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions,[a] as the heathen *do*: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.[b]

a Eccles. 5. 2.

8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him.

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art

b 1 Kings 18. 26, 29; Acts 19. 34.

Gen. xvi. 13: Jacob, in a journey, Gen. xxviii. 16, 17; Daniel, in a lion's den, Dan. vi. 22; The three children in a flaming furnace, Dan. iii. 25, 28: Peter and Paul in dungeons, Acts xii. 5, 7; xvii. 25: and John in Patmos, Rev. i. 10. God loves to answer prayer, when not only the body is in the closet, but the heart driven in there too, by storms without. Prayer in this discourse follows alms, because some preparation of life is essential to fervent prayer. James v. 16.

7. *Vain repetitions.* The Greek means *talking as Battus.* He is said to have been a babbling Greek poet, who wrote unmeaning verses. Do not indulge in senseless calling over the names and attributes of God, as if He could be flattered by it into granting prayers. The heathen were much given to this custom. See 1 Kings xviii. 26; Acts xix. 34. ¶ *The heathen.* This word in Saxon meant a person living on a heath, or in the country; and as such were Christianized last, it was used for the unconverted, the gentiles or pagans. With the Jews all men were called *the nations.* We translate this word sometimes in a bad sense — gentiles or unbelievers; sometimes in a good, *people.* "Bless our God all ye people, i. e. gentiles." Ps. lxvi. 8. So St. Paul speaks, Rom. xv. 9–12. It is sometimes vainly objected that this verse condemns a liturgy, especially that part of it which is called the litany, in which certain words are repeated. But, 1. Our Lord condemned only *vain* repetitions, not those which are proper and expressive. 2. He speaks of the manner of *private* prayer, not of public. 3. Our Lord gave us a form of prayer which is repeated daily in private by thousands with profit. 4. Our Saviour in His own prayers hesitated not to repeat His petitions in the "same words." The Litany is a repetition of words, but not of wants. It is the most plain, proper, and compendious prayer which can be found.

9–13. The following is called the Lord's Prayer. It is perfect in its kind; short, plain, suited to all classes and ages; it suits the services of the Church, meets our wants in times of trouble or danger, and as a seed contains in it the germs or principles of all that man can ask of God. It prays for all wants, spiritual and temporal, for pardon of sin, a godly temper, safety from temptation and evil. It begins in ascription to God and ends in giving Him all glory. Though it wants the usual end of our Christian prayers, the words "for Christ's sake," this is more than supplied by the fact that it is His prayer, and ascends in His own words. It is used by us as a model of prayers, and a complement, to supply their imperfections. It was in the earliest times the root from which sprang the liturgies of Christians, which are still used and imitated by nineteen-twentieths of Christendom. The vain cavil is now and then raised, that Jesus and his disciples are not expressly *said* to have used this prayer. The disciples received it in reply to this wish, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." Lu. xi. 1. Did they refuse to be taught? Surely they must have used it. But the cavil is vain; for granting it, our Lord and His disciples *always* used a *liturgy* in public worship, that is, the Jewish. It contained forms similar to this, so that some maintain that He derived this prayer mostly from the services of the Jews. The disciples attended the synagogues and the temple; and the first pages of Church History record

in[a] heaven, Hallowed be thy[b] name.

10 [c]Thy kingdom come. [d]Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven.

a Lu. 11. 2. *b* Mal. 1. 6. *c* Heb. 11. 39, 40. *d* Ps. 103. 20, 21.

11 [e]Give us this day our daily bread:

12 And forgive us our debts, [f]as we forgive our debtors.

13 And lead us not into[g] temp-

e Prov. 30. 8; John 6. 35. *f* Lu. 7. 40, &c. *g* 2 Pet. 2. 9.

evidence of liturgies being in use among Christians. They are necessary for myriads, and will be used and serve as wings to bear up devout souls to heaven, until the archangel's trump. The reader may consult Bingham's Chris. Antiq. b. xiii. ch. v.; Henry's Church Antiq. b. v. ch. i. § 161; and a tract, "The Companion to the Book of Common Prayer."

9. *After this manner.* St. Luke more stringently, "When ye pray, *say*—" No command could be plainer. We therefor exalt this prayer to that honor, that we do not willingly omit it in our public services, and we make it a part of private devotion. The Catechism thus explains it: "I desire, my Lord God, our Heavenly Father, who is the giver of all goodness, to send His grace unto me and to all people; that we may worship Him, serve Him, and obey Him as we ought to do; and I pray unto God that He will send us all things that are needful both for our souls and bodies; and that He will be merciful unto us and forgive us our sins; and that it will please Him to save and defend us in all dangers both of soul and body; and that He will keep us from all sin and wickedness, and from our spiritual enemy, and from everlasting death; and this I trust He will do of His mercy and goodness, through our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore I say Amen; so be it." ¶ *Our Father.* God is father from eternity in the Trinity; again, of all creatures by creation; but in this sense, by redemption and adoption. We should cast away all sin, and strive with all the soul to be, in aspiration at least, worthy to say *Our Father.* Christ only could say *My Father.* We must go in Him; in His Body, the Church, and as one of a brotherhood in Christ, and are taught by this plural word *our*, to carry with us before God a heart filled with love of the people of God. ¶ *Hallowed be Thy name.* Hallowed, made holy, used reverently and manifested in holiness. The *name* of God is put for all his attributes, all that we know and believe of Him.

10. *Thy kingdom come.* See note, ch. iii. 2. That spiritual kingdom begun here, which is to be perfected at the final coming of Christ. Rev. xxii. 20. This petition is for the extension of that kingdom now, for the good of all men who are saved by it, for the perfection of the saints, and our own personal salvation in it. It will certainly come, but we pray for its power to be in us. ¶ *Thy will be done.* God's will is guided by infinite mercy and wisdom, and is therefore best for all His creatures. It will be done in His kingdom, and we pray for submission of our wills to His, that we may act here with the active obedience of the angels; that the will of the wicked may be restrained and thwarted. While we are submissive to God's will we are safe and happy.

11. *Our daily bread.* This prayer is in common, for the common good. No Christian must desire to be blessed alone. He prays for all. It is a daily prayer, since it needs to be repeated for each day's bread; as St. Luke has it, "day by day." Bread is here used for all that is necessary for the support of body and soul. Matt. iv. 4. It teaches us our daily dependence upon God for all things. This petition was touchingly illustrated by a missionary to the Indians, who went among them in the wilderness, "as," he said, "trusting to that Providence, which fed the little birds, and clothed the fields, and taught man this prayer." He was not deserted in his work.

12. *Our debts.* Debts as here used are failures in duty to God—those things

tation, but deliver us from[a] evil; For thine is the[b] kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.[c]

14 [d]For, if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

15 But if ye forgive not men

a John 17. 15; 1 John 5. 18. *b* 1 Chron. 2. 9, 11. *c* Ps. 41. 13.

d Mark 11. 25.

which His commands make necessary; in which we are conscious of being wanting. Debts to us are the same failures in others, offences against us, in our rights or affections. It has no reference to debts of business, but only of duties. St. Luke is rendered, "forgive us *our sins;* for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us." Luke xi. 4. Our sins are done away by the covenant of Christ. He therefore annexes one single comment to this prayer, to inform us on what condition He will confirm our pardon, v 14. ¶ *As we forgive our debtors.* This is the condition of this pardon, the temper which any one using this prayer must have. For unless one has a Christian temper he may be calling down vengeance on himself, since he has not pardoned others. How important therefore is it that we examine our hearts and lives to find if we have that marriage garment, required by God in Holy Scripture—a loving and obedient mind. Said St. Gregory, "That good thing, which in our penitence we ask of God, we should first turn and bestow on our neighbor."

13. *Lead us not.* Suffer us not to be led. For God tempts no one. If we fall, it is by the fault of our own evil passions. James i. 13–15. ¶ *Into temptation.* This word, in Scripture, has two shades of meaning. 1. Trial, when God chastens us, or suffers trouble to come on us for our good, in order, as the Prayer Book has it, "to try your patience, for the example of others, and that your faith may be found, in the day of the Lord, laudable, glorious and honorable, to the increase of glory and endless felicity." Trials sent by Him have no natural tendency to beguile one into sin. 2. Temptation means, the wickedly inducing any one to commit sin. Satan and evil men are the actors in such tempting to wickedness, and a wicked heart is the prime doer. We pray God not to permit trials to overpower us, by their bitterness (see 2 Cor. xii. 8), nor suffer the devil, the world, or the flesh to triumph over us. If it is His will, we would avoid temptation, if not, would trust in Him to lead us safely through it. Prayer before trial is the surest defence against a fall. Eph. vi. 18. ¶ *Deliver us from evil.* The Greek word has the meaning in the New Testament. 1. Evil, as seen in human actions or circumstances. 2. The devil, the author and mover of it. By some it is here considered to mean both, certainly the latter, as it does, ch. xiii. 19; 1 John ii. 13, 14; iii. 12. Hence the Catechism words it "deliver us from all sin and wickedness, and from our spiritual enemy, and from everlasting death." This petition ends the Prayer proper, the rest being an ascription of praise. There is a beautiful analogy, visible with a little study, between the seven petitions of this prayer, and the seven blessings with which this discourse begins. ¶ *Thine is the kingdom.* All power in heaven and earth belongs to God, who can deliver us from evil, and promises to do so in His eternal kingdom, if while we ascribe to Him the glory which is due, we also obey all the laws which He gives us in His kingdom here, namely, the holy Church. ¶ *The power.* Thou, O God, canst do all that we ask, and we ask that Thy will be done. Short-sighted and weak as we are, we rejoice to submit all things to Thy power, and feel under us Thine everlasting arms. ¶ *The glory.* From this word in Greek we term such ascriptions as this, *doxologies.* The glory of God is the supreme end of His creation. For this a Christian thinks, labors and prays. ¶ *Amen.* So may it be. We seal this blessed Prayer

their trespasses,[a] neither will your Father forgive your trespassses.

16 ¶ Moreover, when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a[b] sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

a Jas. 2. 13. *b* Is. 58. 5.

with this old Hebrew word, with which the Israelites once sealed the curses of their law. Deut. xxvii. 14–26; Numb. v. 22. It was used by them also in response to blessings. 1 Chron. xvi. 36; Ps. cvi. 48. Jeremiah explains it, "The Lord do so, the Lord perform the words which thou hast prophesied, &c." Jer. xxviii. 6. The Hebrew word means *Truth*. As a response it means, "may all this that I have uttered come to pass. I assent to it, I build on it." It was so used by the first Christians. 1 Cor. xiv. 16. We continue it, with great profit in all public prayers. The people thereby assent to them, and make them their own. Responses in worship are the dictate of our common nature. They give unity, force and interest to our services. They are built on ancient custom (Ex. xv. 21), and have been practised in all ages.

14, 15. *For if ye forgive.* This is *the only comment* made on the Lord's Prayer. Being all that He saw fit to add, it is emphatic. It lies at the foundation of the Gospel covenant, ch. xviii. 35; Mark xi. 25. There is to be no limit to our forgiveness, and but one condition, the penitence of the offender. Ch. xviii. 22. "We call in vain for mercy, if we will not show mercy to our neighbors; if we will not put wrath and displeasure forth from our hearts, toward our Christian brother, no more will God forgive the wrath and displeasure that our sins have deserved from Him."—*Church Homilies.* ¶ *Trespasses.* Sins against God, or offences to men; those things which conscience, enlightened by the Scripture, tells us to be wrong in ourselves, or those which we feel as wrongs in others.

16. *Be not as the hypocrites.* Be not ostentatious in thy fasting, but do it to God. When a corruption of anything is reprehended, it shows that the thing itself is good and useful. If *fasting* had been of no use to spiritual men, Jesus would have passed it by in silence. Hence it is not too much to say that it is here not only commended, but virtually commanded. Jesus says *when* ye fast, when ye pray, when ye give alms, of course expecting us to do each of these necessary works of piety. And after prayer He comes to fasting, its twin sister and helper. Fasting is abstinence from our usual food and pleasures in whole or part, for a portion or the whole day. Its object is to deny oneself mere physical delight, to leave the mind clear, to remind us of the necessity of keeping the body in subjection, to afflict the proud spirit, and to use larger measures of devotion. Public fasts are meant to humble a people, call them off from the vanities of the world to confession of sin, in such wise as to pray more earnestly to God for their pardon. See Joel ii. 12. 13; Lev. xvi. 29–31; xxiii. 27; Is. lviii. 5, 6; Matt. ix. 15; xvii. 21. This help to devotion and successful prayer is sadly neglected at present. Some say, "It is not commanded." But is it not commended and implied? The Gospel is of a generous spirit; some of its laws are the more binding for being implied. So says our Lord, "*Then shall they fast.*" Ch. ix. 15. It is an unworthy quibble. Examples of this practice are given in great saints, who received large measures of grace, Moses (Ex. xxiv, 18), Elijah (1 Kings xix.), David (2 Sam. iii. 35), Ezra, and others (see 2 Cor. vi. 4. 5. xi. 27). The Jews fasted publicly four times in the year,—in memory of the capture of Jerusalem, of the burning of the Temple, of the death of Gedaliah (Jer. xli. 4), and of the commencement of the attack on the holy city. Zech. viii. 19. The Church

17 But thou, when thou fastest, [a]anoint thine head, and wash thy face;

18 That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father, which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

19 ¶ Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where

[a] Ruth 3. 3.

enjoins on her members certain annual and weekly fasts, as free-will offerings and helps to "extraordinary acts and exercises of devotion;" and private fasts with prayer in certain cases, as for those seeking baptism. ¶ *Of a sad countenance.* Of a sour, austere or mortified look. The private fast which is made known intentionally or by want of self-control so far fails of its object. Is. lviii. 4. A man cannot be gay or trifling, for hunger makes him sober. Fasting may show itself in spite of us, we should only avoid the desire of making a show of it. ¶ *Disfigure their faces.* Those who fasted acted as mourners, (Lev. xvi. 29), "to afflict their souls." The Pharisees put on sackcloth, rent their clothes, strewed ashes over their heads, and adopted all the external signs of grief, but did not take care to rend their hearts, and turn unto the Lord their God. Whenever one loses the inward delights of piety, he is apt to seek for the wretched pleasure of being seen of men. Let him seek the influence of God's Spirit, and he neither overvalues the esteem of others, nor seeks to impress them by a sanctimonious countenance.

17. 18. *But thou, &c.* The Church has regulated this subject, so far as it relates to public worship. Her members are bound to conform to her laws. See rule of fasts in the Book of Common Prayer—private fasts are left to the discretion of each man. Let all pray for "grace to use such abstinence, that the flesh being subdued to the Spirit he may ever obey its godly motions, in righteousness and true holiness." Fasting is made a part of the preparation for Baptism. The rubric bids such to give timely notice of their wish to the parish minister, that among other things "they may be exhorted to prepare themselves with prayers and *fasting*, for the receiving of this Holy Sacrament." ¶ *Anoint thy head.* In the hot, dry climate of Palestine, oil was used as an article of luxury, for softening and perfuming the skin. The climate rendered it peculiarly grateful. The same cause rendered frequent washing and baths necessary. The Mosaic Law also commanded them. See Mark vii. 2, 3; vi. 13. Of course those who used these articles would feel their want, and be noticed by their neighbors. The Eastern Dervishes still practise all the forms of piety, which can be set off by slovenliness and dirt. We are cautioned to avoid singularity in trifles of dress and ornament. A member of a family cannot fast in secret, because all will know his habit. This is not to be regarded. Let him not parade his fasting nor judge others. The reward of fasting is found in greater fervency and purity of devotion, in a larger measure of grace, in a certain gentle, subdued, docile character of piety, which is unmistakable, and in the future favor of the Saviour.

19. *Lay not up, &c.* Jesus passes from prayer and fasting to their result, *heavenly mindedness*, a treasure in heaven. His disciples are not to be covetous, nor lovers of this world, but to use their goods in charity as wise stewards. St. Chrysostom says, "Mercy and piety are the wings of fasting, by which it mounts up to heaven, without which it lies dead upon the earth. Therefore when we fast, let us lay up our dinner in the hands of the poor, that the hands of the poor may preserve for us what our bellies would destroy. The hands of the poor is *the treasury of Christ;* fasting without mercy, is but an image of famine; fasting without works of piety, is but an occasion of covetousness, because by such fasting, what is taken from the body, only swells the purse."

moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:[a]

20 But lay up for yourselves [b]treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.

21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

22 The light of the body is the eye:[c] if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of dark-

a Prov. 23. 4, 5; Jas. 5. 1-4. *b* Lu. 12. 33; 1 Tim. 6. 19.

c Lu. 11. 34, 36.

We may lay up here for the support of our families or for our own security, but must avoid covetousness. A part of our gains should go to the poor. We cannot keep riches. We can only use them upon ourselves, or in doing good. The Christian chooses the latter. ¶ *Moth.* A small insect destroying cloths. The Jews laid up their treasure very often in fine, showy cloths, which were exposed to this insect. ¶ *Rust.* In Greek *brosis*, any thing that eats; here that which destroys grain; locusts, vermin or mildew. Grain was of great value in a country situated like Palestine, and was kept with difficulty. There is allusion to another sort of wealth, which a man keeps in his house, which was liable to be stolen by robbers. All worldly wealth is uncertain. Love and care for it make one anxious, and turn the thoughts off from heaven. Ps. xxxix. 6; lxii. 10.

20. *Treasures in heaven.* So Solomon, "There is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches." Prov. xiii. 7. These are *true riches.* Lu. xvi. 11. We lay up treasure in heaven by a holy and charitable life. We are justified by faith and saved by grace, and without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Of this holiness there are these three vital parts, faith, hope and charity, but the greatest of these is charity.

21. *Your heart also.* Says Dr. South, "no man ever went to heaven, whose heart was not there before." All our desires must tend thither, and then with heart and treasure both there, it is certain that all else about us will follow in due time. Acts of mercy and love, when done in a true faith, send the heart above. By giving freely we learn to sever our hold on earth, before we are called to leave it.

22, 23. *The light of the body.* A single eye is one in perfect health, which receives and enjoys pure light, and sees things as they are. A sickly eye is unable to bear the light, or is unsteady between two objects; and another stage is, the eye blinded and lost in darkness. So the eye of the soul, the conscience, troubled, painful and unsteady in a man who yields to every worldly temptation, is corrupted in one given up to covetousness. 1 Cor. ii. 14. Jesus warns us against this covetous spirit, which "walks after the flesh." We can have but one supreme good, but one chief treasure, and God means that to be Himself. If we look up to Him, we have light, and become pure and good. If we look to any thing else, we stumble and become darkened in mind, and are lost. ¶ *Single.* Sound or healthy. A healthy eye sees the light of day with pleasure. ¶ *The body shall be full of light.* It shall have all the light which it needs to enjoy life. This figurative use of light, is common in the New Testament, "whatsoever doth make manifest is light." Eph. v. 13. The reason and conscience are to the soul, what the eyes are to the body. They see and apprehend moral and spiritual truth, and, if not perverted by the corrupt desires of the heart, they see by the light of Scripture, the will of God and all duties. John i. 4; ix. 4, 5. This light in the heathen is much darkened (Acts xvii. 27); in worldly

ness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great *is* that darkness!

24 ¶ [a]No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

25 Therefore I say unto you, [b]Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is

a Lu. 16. 13.

b Lu. 12. 22; Ps. 55. 22.

and vicious men, it is more obscured (Rom. i. 19), and in the reprobate seems wholly extinct. Balaam had a *double* eye. He saw God's will, but loved the wages of unrighteousness. 2 Pet. ii. 15. Saul, the king, was agonized by the light, and perished: while Judas was a more fearful instance of this darkness. Avarice ruined Demas, as it does now the thousands, who refuse to obey and fear God.

24. *No man can serve two masters.* Two supreme lords, each demanding his whole service. The heart must be fixed either on this world or on God. There is no compromise. If we choose one, we cannot choose the other, for they are opposite. They are like light and darkness. He that will love the world, is the enemy of God. James iv. 4. The Christian is one who hates the world, that is, places it secondary, and if need be, rejects its wisdom and honors, and chooses the ways of piety. ¶ *Mammon.* This was the Syriac name of an idol, esteemed to be the god of wealth, called Plutus by the Greeks. It personifies wealth, and in a more extended sense, every thing which is an object of desire to a carnal heart, as honor, fashion, business, pleasure, and gayety. No one can unite these pursuits to piety, and be bad and good, proud, humble, sensual and pure at one and the same time. See Rom. viii. 13; xii. 2.

25. *Therefore.* If then ye give up the world, if ye are willing to put the service of God before the care of the body, He will take care of you. Here follow several arguments, which a timid heart may offer, fear of want, hunger, &c., and they are disposed of with promises, which we should oftener study and apply. ¶ *Take no thought.* Be not in such care and trouble of mind as to distrust the providence of God. Unreasonable anxiety about this life is unbecoming in a believer. He may labor diligently for his daily bread, and be careful to provide clothing, and a comfortable home for himself and children. This is right. See Rom. xii. 11. 2 Thess. iii. 10. But in doing this, he must trust in God, and feel a constant dependence upon Him for life, food and all things. He is "Lord of life and death, and of all things to them pertaining, as youth, strength, health, age, weakness and sickness." God will ensure to Christians all the *necessaries* of life. The luxuries He often withholds, for their good. ¶ *Is not the life, &c.?* If God gives life and a body, will He not as a wise Ruler sustain them, if used in His service? Will He give the greater gift, and withhold the less? ¶ *Meat.* Food of any kind. Raiment is any sort of clothing. These words imply that necessaries will certainly be given to those who serve God. Among the Eastern people there was always a large class of persons, who lived from day to day, not having it in their power to lay up a store for the future. We in the West seldom are pushed for actual bread for the morrow, but may feel the need of this entire trust in God, against cares which come to all men in common. There is a touching incident related of a poor clergyman in England. He wrote in his diary, "To-morrow I and my family will be turned into the street, as I cannot pay a debt forced on me by another person." He paused a moment and added, "What then, poor soul? *God is in the street.*" His faith was rewarded, and the evil averted.

not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns: yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin;

29 And yet I say unto you,

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26. *The fowls of the air.* How gently and forcibly do these words urge the Christian to trust his Father in heaven, by the example of the irrational creation. Man has reason and revelation to guide him: they only instinct. Bp. Wainwright, when on Mount Tabor, which is in sight of this spot, on which Jesus was sitting, saw an illustration of this verse. "In the East two immense flocks of cranes were seen poised in majestic flight, over the valley of the Jordan. Their movements were slow and orderly, and seemed, like the evolutions of two immense armies, now wheeling, now in close columns, then displaying the column in a long line to the right and left, again forming themselves in a wedge-like battalion. The number of these birds must have been immense, and their white wings reflecting the sun, gave them a most brilliant appearance." Such may have been wheeling above this assembly, or others singing in the trees near by. They sow not, nor spin —man must do both. But when he sees or hears these birds, he has a reminder to do this with an unfaltering trust in God, nor suffer the cares of this life to lead him into sin and forgetfulness of his birth-right as a child of God. ¶ *Better than they.* God has freely given His Son to redeem the souls of men from death—will He not then value them far above all creatures, and give them all things? Read the 162 Hymn.

27. *Which of you, &c.* Jesus now shows the *folly* of such anxiety. Man cannot control the future in the smallest things. He cannot change a hair in its source, nor add to his natural height by his own power. "The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." Prov. xvi. 33. Men put forth efforts, boast of the future, and say, "To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city and continue there a year, and buy and sell and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even as a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live and do this or that. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil." James iv. 13, &c. Our best possession is the intelligent conviction that "godliness with contentment is great gain." 1 Tim. vi 6.; iv. 8. ¶ *One cubit.* A measure from the elbow to the end of the middle finger, or about eighteen inches. To give this increase to the length of the body is impossible, and equally so in a moral sense, to exalt one's station without permission from God. ¶ *Stature.* Dr. Hammond perfers to render this *duration of life.* A cubit is a large measure to be added to the body, but a small consideration, added to one's life. It seems more to the point, to call men off from too great concern about their life, by reminding them that they have no power to prolong it for an hour. Either rendering teaches us how little wisdom is shown in anxiety about things which are not under our control.

28, 29. *The lilies of the field.* Jesus removes one by one the causes of our anxiety; 1. Anxiety about daily support, v. 2. 2. For the future in laying up a store for evil days, v. 26. 3. For station or long life, v. 27. 4. Ambition to appear in great splendor or style, an object which the worldly mind is constantly seeking. Nature rebukes the

That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, *shall he* not much more *clothe* you, O ye of little faith?

31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek) [a]for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

33 But seek ye[b] first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

a Ps. 37. 23.

b Mark 10. 30; Lu. 12. 31; Rom. 8. 28.

vices of artificial society. The grass utters a sermon of reproof. The lilies, growing day and night out of the unsightly ground, washed by dew and rain, and covering at times the fields of Palestine in myriads, are arrayed without art or labor in the various colors of white and red; and yet simple as is their beauty, not the grandest and most magnificent of all the Oriental Kings, at the highest pitch of his splendor, was arrayed like them. Solomon was the wonder of the East for wisdom and riches—and yet the saddest preacher of all, on the subject of the vanity and vexation of worldly care and ambition. Hardly a page of his writings but might serve as a comment on this declaration of our Saviour. ¶ *Cast into the oven.* Any thing smaller than a tree may be called grass. "In Barbary it is usual to employ stalks of flowers, myrtle, rosemary, &c., to heat their ovens. This circumstance affords a clear commentary on the words of our Saviour."—*Dr. Shaw.* Wherever wood is scarce, people resort to every kind of fuel; and the ovens of the Jews were of the simplest character, often probably a mere hole in the sand, which could be heated with the simplest fuel.

32. *The Gentiles seek.* All other nations were so called by the Jews. Gentiles were idolaters, and for the most part very wicked. The Jews were wicked enough, but pagans surpassed them in guilt. Jesus uses the name, as a convenient one, for all those who are not in covenant with Him; for worldly people or sinners. ¶ *Your heavenly Father.* A Father, above all the All Merciful, cannot suffer His children to suffer, and the Gentiles to triumph over them. He knows how to give good gifts to them. It is an argument to the affections. See ch. vii. 11.

33. This precept sums up the matter. He who seeks the glory of God as the prime object of life, will so entirely rely on Him for help, that judging Him by his own faithful love, he will dismiss all care about earthly things. He may plunge into deserts, go as a missionary to ignorant and hostile tribes, if such is his vocation, and God will raise him up friends wherever he goes. Men will spontaneously honor the zealous Christian, and give him of their abundance. Let us bear each day's burden, toil cheerfully, and fight down with prayer all the spectral cares and doubts which gather around us. We need never sin in order to live, nor seek the tricks of double dealing to be safe from harm. "Keep innocency, and take heed unto the thing that is right; for that shall bring a man peace at the last." See Ps. xxxvii. 38, 25. *Psalter translation.* To be simple, quiet, steadfast in the path of duty, is the best policy and the truest wisdom.

ADDITIONAL NOTE.

This chapter, from verses 16 to 21, relating to fasting, is used by the Church as the Gospel for *Ash Wednesday.* This is the first day of the Quadrigesimal or Forty days' fast, observed annually with religious services in honor of the events recorded ch. iv. 2. &c. It comes forty-

34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day *is* the evil thereof.

a Lu. 6. 37; Rom. 14. 4, 10; 1 Cor. 4. 5,

six days before Easter. The six Sundays are not reckoned as days of fasting, being always Feasts. The observance of a Lenten season annually, began in the earliest ages of the Church, and has been universally observed. It has wise reasons to commend it, even without the argument from its antiquity. At one time Christians began it on Ash Wednesday by frequenting the Churches, putting dust and ashes upon their heads, and on the floors of the Churches, as marks of mourning for sin, and to remind them of the death which came into the world by sin. This custom gave the name *Ash* Wednesday. The name of Lent is retained, as also many others, by the Prayer Book, not because Churchmen imitate or sympathize with the corruptions of the Church of Rome; but because they claim to be, in respect of doctrine and discipline *one and the same with the early Church in its purest and best days.* We value certain customs, names, feasts and fasts, holy days and creeds, not only as good in themselves, but also because we believe, that the early Fathers from whom they came, as they had the best opportunity of judging of the right interpretation of the Lord's will in faith and practice, had also a remarkable measure of piety and honesty, as witnesses of facts which were then recent. And we value them as useful *against* the false claims of Rome, who is never stronger in argument, than when she has to deal with men ignorant of or despising the light of primitive antiquity in explaining Scripture. The abuse of religious customs, when they symbolize important truths—and what is more important than the unity of the Church?—is no good argument against their use. We could do without these ancient names and customs, but we cannot do without the fact of our ecclesiastical descent from the Apostles. Families retain their heirlooms and relics; these are ours. All Churchmen are instructed by these ancient names, that their Church is not of yesterday. She has no *ism* or human name, but has kept her Lents with Gregories and Augustines in all the ages past. We join hands over the centuries gone, with all the good and saintly souls who have gone to rest, and we retain even names for their sakes: while we observe the sacred customs which these names teach us to hold in honor, *for our own.*

CHAPTER VII.

JUDGE[a] not, that ye be not judged.

2 For with what judgment ye judge,[b] ye shall be judged: and

b Jas. 2. 13.

1. *Judge not.* Jesus condemns a censorious, fault-finding temper; that evil disposition which, devoid of charity, thinketh all evil, and even invents: which spies out faults better left secret; drags to light stories of shame; magnifies trifling offences; sees a mote in every eye, and in a word is merciless to the faults and frailties of human nature. James iii. 6. Men take revenge against such persons, and judge back with a severe retribution. They are also condemned by God; for the native virulence of such a temper is a deadly poison to peace and piety. There is nothing in this command to prevent judges by office, from passing sentences according to law. Nor does it forbid Christians from making proper distinctions between good and evil in men or actions. They cannot confuse these distinctions and be true. Isa. v. 20. St. John bids us not to say God-speed to the heretical, "for he that biddeth him God-speed is partaker of his evil deeds." 2 John 10, 11.

2. *For with what judgment, &c.* This seems to have been a proverb, which our Lord adopted as containing a sound truth, which His hearers would recognize at once. ¶ *Mete.* Measure. Many persons who now complain of harsh judgments in others, may find this text

with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and behold, a beam *is* in thine own eye?

5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

6 ¶ Give not that which is [a]holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

[a] Prov. 23. 9; Acts 13. 45, 46.

true, by adopting a milder rule in their own judgment of others. A Christian who feels himself a sinner before God will deal gently with the infirmities of others.

3, 5. *Hypocrite.* See note, ch. vi. 2. ¶ *The mote.* This is a proverb, and similar ones are found in all languages. We say in English, in some cases, "It is Satan reproving sin." The mote is any small speck or spot floating in the eye-ball, without destroying the vision: the beam, a piece of square timber, which would cover the whole eye. It teaches us that those who have great faults, are found judging severely the less faults in others. The wicked and irritable are not fit judges of others. The blind are not oculists. ¶ *First cast out, &c.* We are taught to begin with our own faults, when we aspire to remove those of our neighbors. There is always freedom given us to judge and chastise *self* as much as we will. It would be a happier world if men would transfer the energy of reproof which they now waste on their neighbors, to their own faults and follies; would look into the perfect law of liberty, and there seeing how far short they are of all that God desires in them, would correct and purify themselves. If one spends most of his censoriousness on himself, he will doubtless be easily pardoned for any seeming blindness to the infirmities of others. The charity which "thinketh no evil," is that which "never faileth."

6. *Give not, &c.* Give not the sacrifices of the temple to dogs. Do not put before wicked and scornful men, the holy and sacred thoughts and feelings of a religious life. Judge them not, but at the same time be discreet in your conversation with them. The dog was an unclean animal under the law, for its quarrelsome, filthy nature. The Jew insulted another bitterly when he likened him to a dog dead or living. 1 Sam. xxiv. 14 Ps. xxii. 16. ¶ *Pearls.* These are valuable gems, found in the ocean, hard, white, with a peculiar soft light, which gives them their beauty. A single pearl brought from Catifa in Arabia, was bought by Tavernier for £110,000. By them our Lord represented rare, precious, spiritual truths. Ch. xiii, 45; Rev. xxi. 21. The holy feelings of a pure, sensative soul, are its treasures—as we would not cast pearls to swine, so we are not to desecrate holy things, by exposing them to the cavils of sensual and abandoned men. See Tit. i. 15. We are not to seek spiritual aid from the base and wicked. Holy things are to be used in a holy manner. The Christian should guide himself with discretion and modesty, and not expose himself to the injuries of those who know no better. Acts xiii. 45,46.

7, 8. *Ask, seek, knock.* This repetition is a climax, to impress the privilege of prayer and its success. *Ask*, and yet stop not with that, "for men ought always to pray and not to faint." If we ask any thing of a great person, we are willing also to go to and seek him, in order to obtain it. We go to his dwelling and knock till we are admitted. So with prayer, use the same means that

7 ¶ [a]Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

8 For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.

9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

11 If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you,[b] do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

13 ¶ [c]Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide *is* the gate, and

a Matt. 21. 22; Mark 11. 24; Lu. 11. 9; John 16. 24; Jas. 1. 5, 6.

b Lev. 19. 18; Gal. 5. 14. *c* Lu. 13. 23–27.

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you would use in a similar case, and you will succeed. The Prayer Book has adopted these words in the service for baptism. We pray for the persons desiring the rite, "Receive them, O Lord, as Thou hast promised by Thy well beloved Son, saying, Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you: so give unto us who ask, let us who seek find, open the door unto us who knock, that these persons may enjoy the everlasting benediction of thy heavenly washing, and may come to the eternal kingdom which Thou hast promised by Christ our Lord." Thus we have in Scripture the promise, in the Church the example of effectual prayer. James iv. 3; v. 16, 17.

9—11. *A Stone.* This would not only refuse his request, but also mock the son, with that which might have the form of bread, but would not be harder than such a parent's heart. So giving a serpent for a fish, not only mocks but destroys the son. Though we are evil as a race, we cry out against such monsters of inhumanity. And so, conversely, we should strengthen our faith in our Father above. He will not give stones or serpents, if we are His children, not even if we ask for them, but will give us good continually. 2 Cor. xii. 7—9.

12. *Therefore all things.* Therefore, as your Father in heaven does good to all by His love, so live by the same rule. This is called the Golden rule. All men perceive its truth and value, and acknowledge that the thousand troubles and evils of life would be removed by its observance. It is subordinate only to the "first and great commandment," of supreme love to God. It flows from that command, being the same feeling shown in mercy and justice to all men. The Christian may know his own heart and glorify God, by his care of this command. He must put himself in the place of others, and judge impartially how they can be affected by his actions. He is not to do to others all they may wish to extort from him, but only such things as they may justly, fairly claim at his hands. ¶ *The law and the prophets.* The Old Testament. Love to God and men was the spirit and end of the Jewish dispensation. It fulfilled the law. Rom. xiii. 10. The prophets exhorted men to that holiness which resulted in it. Our Lord says *therefore*, and joins this verse to the preceding, as if He said, "Avoid harsh judgments, pray earnestly; and to complete the circle of duties, live innocently with all men, doing to others, as you pray God to do to you."

13, 14. *Strait gate.* The narrow or small gate. Dr. Whitby sees in these words an allusion to the Jewish custom of having a small gate left open in the houses where marriages are celebrated,

broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

14 ‖ Because, strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

15 ¶ Beware of false[a] prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

16 Ye shall know them by their fruits: Do men gather grapes[b] of thorns, or figs of thistles?

17 Even so[c] every good tree

‖ or, *how.* *a* Deut. 13. 1–3; Matt. 24. 4, 5. *b* Lu. 6. 43. *c* Jer. 11. 19; Matt. 12. 33.

which little gate the guests could find, but which would be unnoticed by the passing crowd. Others imagine two gates of a city, differing from each other in size. But the image is simply of two gates, perhaps only taken from the common similitude of life as a *pathway* to another world. Ps. xvi. 11; Prov. iv. 14, 18. On the one the worldly pass in crowds; at either end the gate may be; the little gate opens out of it, which the few who are in earnest can find. We must be energetic and active to find out the path of duty, to repent, to throw off our sins, to walk with patience the path of God's commands. We are not to look to the crowd, nor follow with them. One gate is wide and the way broad, because crowds go upon it, and because men have a long catalogue of sins, by which they travel the primrose path. Gal. v. 19, 21. The other gate is strait and the way narrow, because few find it, and because the line of duty is single, and a pious life is one of self-denial of all the evil passions. Its rewards are given in pious contemplation, by the Spirit of God.

15. *False prophets.* Do not follow false guides, i. e. heretical teachers and vain men, who pretend to be ministers of God. See 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2. Ancient prophets often wore garments of sheepskin, such as they could obtain from shepherds. To put on such a robe was equivalent to setting up the character of a prophet. 2 Kings i. 8; Zech. xiii. 4. Or we may imagine one coming to the flock of the Church as a wolf might be fancied to come into a flock of sheep in disguise, in order to do greater mischief. Heretics and false teachers are the wolves of the spiritual flock. Acts. xx. 29; Tit. i. 16; 1 Tim. vi. 5. ¶ *Ravening wolves.* Hungry wolves, the terror and abomination of shepherds. Such are heretics and schismatics. How many Christians now guard their sheep, but feel no fear in exposing their souls to every wind of false doctrine.

16. *By their fruits.* By their actions, their life and conversation. We may not always know them at once, but time will disclose their true nature. God's laws act against the hypocrite to drag him to the light. A tree seems good, puts out leaves and flowers, but its fruit tests and manifests its character. A man may deceive for a while, but his character will be put in trial before he is aware and shown to all. Judas for three years passed, as Bp. Andrews quaintly says, as a "pater pauperum," *a father of the poor.* It was inevitable that his hour should come to appear in his true character. So of false doctrines. The truth abides; error changes and shifts; alluring, novel, original, startling, and always *changing.*

17. *A corrupt tree.* The word *sapros* signifies a tree which has been good and is corrupted, rotten at the heart, and cannot bring forth sound fruit. So a corrupt man may repent and do works of righteousness. Rom. vi. 21. It is while corrupt and deceitful that he is unable to do good works in faith.

21. *Not every one, etc.* These false prophets and their victims, who err from the truth, and follow ways of unrighteousness, are warned of their destruction. They now profess to follow Christ, and cry with the loudest, "Lord, Lord," but they are not His servants. He has not sent them. There is a unity of faith which alone brings forth the

bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

18 A [a]good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

20 Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them.

21 ¶ Not every one that saith unto me,[b] Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not[c] prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

23 [d]And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

24 ¶ Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken[e] him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock.[f]

26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish[g] man, which built his house upon the sand:

27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that

a Matt. 3. 10; John 15. 2, 6. *b* Matt. 25. 11, 12; Lu. 6. 46. *c* Numb. 24. 4; John 4. 51; 1 Cor. 13. 2. *d* Matt. 25. 12; Lu. 13. 25. *e* Lu. 6. 47, &c.; Prov. 23. 3. *f* 1 Cor. 3. 13. *g* Matt. 25. 1–12.

highest fruits of piety. That we must seek, since it is certain that "They are also to be had accursed that presume to say, that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law and the light of nature. For Holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the name of Jesus Christ, whereby men must be saved." *Article XVIII.* The vital duties of piety are faith in Christ, "humility and repentance, meekness and righteousness, mercifulness, purity and peaceableness, patience under persecution and sufferings for righteousness' sake." Our professions will not save us without these, for "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Heb. xii. 14; 2 Cor. vii. 1.

22, 23. *Many will say, &c.* Dreadful thought, that men can be so deceived! We may escape that error, by having now that which they do not claim. They boast of knowledge of the future, of power to cast out devils, and to work miracles—*but not of holiness.* They mistook the shell for the substance, and thought power was sanctity, and privilege piety. Some think popularity, skill in speaking and praying, influence with others will serve their turn, but if they have not *charity* it is nothing. 1 Cor. xiii. 2. ¶ *In that day.* The Jews had expectations of a future judgment. Ps. xcviii. 9; Joel ii. 1. It is more clearly revealed in the New Testament. ¶ *Profess.* Solemnly, publicly declare. ¶ *Depart.* Leave me—I am not your Lord. "Out of Christ, God is *a consuming fire.*" Heb. xii. 29. They are punished as wrong-doers. 2 Tim. iii. 5.

24–27. *And every one.* This is the seal of the discourse, the solemn declaration that in these chapters is found the SPIRITUAL COVENANT. By these

house; and it fell: and great[a] was the fall of it.

28 And it came to pass when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine.

29 For he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes.

[a] Heb. 10. 26, 27.

terms we Christians live and will hereafter stand or fall. The language here assumes a sublime, yet simple majesty. The Jews felt it with peculiar force. The day was fair, all was quiet. The wadies and gullies around were empty: the Jordan flowing by in its distant bed, the sea of Galilee lying in calm picturesque beauty below them. All knew how soon this could be changed. A little cloud in the west, the heavens growing black; storm and rushing winds with floods of rain, thunder and lightnings, and these wadies would be roaring with irresistible torrents down to the lake, sweeping away trees, houses, and men in common ruin. 1 Kings xviii. 44, 45. In such a land a prudent man would build in safe places, lay deep his foundations, and build not for the fair day only, but also for the day of tempest and flood. Thus appealing to their everyday prudence Jesus dismisses the people back to daily life, with a warning image of simplest beauty, which would linger in their memories after He was gone. Be as prudent in your spiritual as in your temporal labors. Hear these sayings of Mine, the law of My kingdom, the new Covenant which I make with you, and build on it, by faith and obedience. A storm must come to try every man's work. If the soul is built on this rock it is safe—if not, it is doomed to ruin. Ps. xi. 6. The prayer of the Visitation office is one that harmonizes with these solemn words. "O God, whose days are without end, and whose mercies cannot be numbered, make us, we beseech Thee, deeply sensible of the shortness and uncertainty of human life: and let thy Holy Spirit lead us through this vale of misery, in holiness and righteousness all the days of our lives; that, when we shall have served Thee in our generation, we may be gathered unto our fathers, having *the testimony of a good conscience; in the communion of the Catholic Church, in the confidence of a certain faith; in the comfort of a reasonable religious and holy hope; in favor with Thee our God, and in perfect charity with the world;* all which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

28. *Were astonished.* Were filled with a tumultuous feeling of surprise, wonder, conviction and admiration at this new doctrine of *The Kingdom.* As the learned Bp. Bull has so clearly demonstrated, Jesus had in this sermon set before them, the *Covenant of Grace:* the righteousnes of the kingdom which He was to set up: the "*Sayings*" on which men were to build for salvation. It was *old*, for conscience approved it,—it was *new*, for they had never heard the pure truth so forcibly brought home to them. The golden rules of this discourse are so familiar to us, that we can hardly fancy the eager groups of people, then questioning and discussing with each other. They had gone out with a vague notion of a temporal kingdom. They had gained a glimpse into the very world of light. Truly an amazed crowd was it that left that hill of Beatitudes in the light of the setting sun—where the Son of God promulgated His Divine Law of Grace, not amid thunders and lightning as He did on Sinai; but with the gentle tones and home-breathing sympathies of daily life—a discourse, simple as the beauty of lilies and birds, profound as the last, eternal destinies of the soul. ¶ *Not as the Scribes.* The Jewish teachers spent most of their labor on the explanations and traditions of the Rabbis.—They had mystified the law until the common people could understand very little of its meaning. They spoke but little from pure love of God, and mostly dwelt on the outside of their glorious dispensation. It is this very power,

CHAPTER VIII.

WHEN he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.

2 And behold, there came a [a]leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean.

a Mark 1. 40; Lu. 3. 12.

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which the hearers wondered at; the power of the intrinsic, simple truth of the religion which Jesus had come to teach.

ADDITIONAL NOTES.

The Fathers delighted in tracing the golden clues and harmonies of this divine sermon in all its parts; and many of them have done so with a degree of unction and success, that may well shame those of our own age who pretend to despise them. They were in some respects less guarded in their language than we might desire, but they often tower above the writers of this day, in their superior knowledge of the harmonies of Scriptural truth. The following brief comment of St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, upon this sermon of the Lord Jesus, is worthy of careful reading. "This is that which is signified in the eleventh Psalm. *I will deal mightily with him; the words of the Lord are pure words, silver tried in the fire, purified of earth, tried seven times.* Ps. xii. 5, 6. The mention of this number admonishes us here to refer all these precepts to these seven sentences that He placed in the begining of this Sermon; these I mean concerning the beatitudes. For one to be angry with his brother without a cause, or to say to him Racha, or call him fool, is a sin of extreme pride, against which is one remedy, that with a suppliant spirit he should seek pardon, and not be puffed up with a spirit of boasting. *Blessed*, then, *are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven* He is consenting to his adversary, that is, in showing reverence to the word of God, who goes to the obeying of His Father's will, not with sententiousness of law, but with meekness of religion, therefore *Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth*, and whosoever feels carnal delights rebel against his right will, will cry out, *O wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* (Rom. vii. 24) and in thus moaning he will implore the aid of the Consoler; whence, *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.* What is there that can be thought of, more toilsome, than in overcoming an evil practice, to cut off those members within us that hinder the kingdom of heaven, and not to be broken down with the pain of so doing. To avoid all accusation of uncleanness, to speak the truth and approve it, not by frequent oaths, but by probity of life. But who would be bold to endure such toils, unless he burned with the love of righteousness as with a hunger and thirst. *Blessed*, therefore, *are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.* Who can be ready to take wrong from the weak, to offer himself to him that asks him, to love his enemies, to do good to them that hate him, to pray for them that persecute him, except he that is perfectly merciful? Therefore *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.* He keeps the eye of his heart pure, who places the end of his good actions not in pleasing men, nor in getting these things that are necessary to this life, and who does not rashly condemn any man's heart, and whatever he gives to another, gives with that intention, with which he would have others give to him. *Blessed*, therefore, *are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.* It must needs be moreover that by a pure heart should be found out the narrow way of wisdom, to which the guile of corrupt men is an obstacle; *Blessed are the peaceful, for they shall be called the sons of God.* But whether we take this arrangement, or any other, these things which we have heard from the Lord must be done, if we would build upon the rock."

CHAPTER VIII.

1. *Followed Him.* Accompanied Him

on His way. They were surprised, delighted, and unwilling to part from His company at once.

2. *There came a leper.* Jesus was then near to Capernaum. This man was "full of leprosy." Lu.v. 12. He was a confirmed case and *incurable* by any medicines or powers of man. The miracle is placed beyond all doubt, since the power of God only could heal by a touch and a word, that distemper which was beyond all hope of cure.

The leprosy is a fearful disease, and occupies a conspicuous place in the Holy Scriptures. In the Old Testament, laws were passed concerning it, and cases of it are described; since it seems to have been chosen and stamped as a disease, calculated in many respects to prove in bodily symptoms, the *incurable* disease *of sin.* It was made *unclean.* Lev. xiii. Numb. v. 2. Certain rites were instituted. Lev. xiv. It seems to have been brought on at times as a special curse to mark God's anger at great crimes. Numb. xii. 10; 2 Kings v. 21. xv. 5.; 2 Chron. xxvi. 19. It was sometimes removed by means of religious rites, and remarkably healed in the instance of Naaman. 2 Kings v. 1, &c. We can hardly obtain a right notion of it, if we neglect those teachings of the Old Testament, which mark it as an emblem of sin. It was ritually unclean. It caused the sick person to be excommunicated from the congregation. He was turned out of the camp. Numb. v. 2. He was commanded to rend his clothes; which was a sign of mourning for the dead, to bare his head, a mark of shame, and to cover his upper lip with a covering, and cry Unclean! Unclean! to warn away every passer by. It was incurable, except by divine mercy. The cure was to be witnessed before the priests, by sacrifices for sin and by an escape-offering of a living bird. All these things show us, in lively emblems, the evil and guilt of sin. Says Bp. Kidder on Lev. xiii. "The leprosy here is considered not only as a disease, but as an infliction for sin, and a defilement and turpitude, and though it be allowed (as the Jews would have it) to be the effect of the pollutions forbid in the two foregoing chapters, yet it may, notwithstanding, be considered also, as a legal pollution of the highest nature, as well as a divine infliction and *representation of the filthy and destructive nature of sin.*" Therefore we see it hold a notable place, among the miracles of Jesus. It shows Him to us, as the One bringing to us "the balm of Gilead as the physician of souls. The leprosy is a disease of most loathsome nature, propagated by descent, from one generation to another. It is doubted whether it is contagious, unless by constant intercourse with the afflicted. It is a subtle disease, usually beginning in the vital centres of the system, and making its appearance only after years of silent ravages. A red spot like a burning boil is the first sign. It becomes white in the centre. Others follow, attended by an intolerable itching. A fetid matter is discharged, a white scab succeeds, and underneath a new sore establishes itself, and so on, until the whole system corrupts and the extremities fall off with tetter. The bones decay; the muscles lose strength and size, a deadly paleness, humid breath, and general collapse come on, and the victim dies, crushed down mentally, morally and physically under a fearful curse. It is akin to the horrible diseases which follow on the crime of debauchery. Bishop Wainwright describes the lepers at Samaria (1849) thus: "These poor creatures were covered with lumps and blotches, some blind, others with limbs deformed in every frightful way, hands swollen and crooked faces distorted, many with their voices reduced to a horrible husky whisper, and worst of all, making a parade of their misery to excite compassion and extort charity. This wretched class of human beings, according to the custom of ancient times, live in communities entirely seperate from their fellows. Their marriages are exclusively with each other. It is a very remarkable fact, that their offspring, until about the age of ten, are comely like other children, when the fatal hereditary taint is sure to develop itself." There is but one disease proper-

3 And Jesus put forth *his* hand and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

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ly called leprosy, and it has now been brought into the Western States of America, by emigrants from Norway. Unless vigorous means are adopted by government to prevent its spread, we shall know more of its ravages than we desire, by its presence. It may remove our fears to know, that unless by marriage, or constant connection with lepers or by certain shameful sins, we are not in danger of receiving this fearful taint. Let us rather fear the leprosy of sin, and find no rest until we have obtained the cure of that which has power "to cast both soul and body into hell." Jesus, while on earth, healed the sick, that we might believe that He is able and willing to wash away our sins, and to make us truly clean. Heb. ix. 13, 14. ¶ *Worshipped Him.* By falling down before him. Lu. v. 12. It was customary in the East to do this before great men, kings and prophets; 1 Sam. xxv. 23, 41. xxviii. 14; Dan. ii. 46. ¶ *If thou wilt,* &c. This was his confession of faith. The act of kneeling manifested his humility and earnestness. Only divine power could help him. He had heard of Jesus, of His claims to divine mission, and His miracles. And he has believed that this Saviour can cure him. We do not look for spiritual faith; that is, a clear apprehension of the whole Gospel, in any one, until after the Descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. ¶ *Make me clean.* He was physically and ritually foul. It was a great act of venturing to come so near to Jesus. Lu. xvii. 12. To be made clean, was not only to be healed, but to be restored to his religious rites, (Lev. xiii. 46.) and to be allowed again to enjoy the intercourse of his fellow men.

3. *Touched Him.* A *prophet* alone could depart from a ritual law of Moses. To touch a leper or a dead body, was forbidden, yet Elijah did it, when he would pray for its restoration to life, 1 K. xvii. 19, 21, also Elisha, 2 Kings iv. 34. Our Lord here shows Himself a greater than either, in healing not by prayer, but in His own name and by His divine power.

3. *See thou tell no man.* See ch. ix. 30; Mark. v. 43. Jesus often bade the persons whom He healed among His own people, to keep it in a measure private. Of course the command was limited, by the fact that they could not conceal it from their acquaintances. They were nor to blazon it, or go about from a sense of gratitude, to preach of His miraculous power. He sometimes commanded the heathen to publish His merciful kindness to them, among their own people. Mark v. 19. Miracles were only an incident of the Gospel. For much attention to them might hide the spiritual meaning of His mission. He healed bodily complaints that men might believe in His power to heal spiritual maladies. But as they, in their selfish and carnal hearts, preferred health to innocence, a sound body to a pure soul, He endeavored to keep down the fame of the miracle that it might not conceal the higher and greater work of salvation. Again, He is thought to have had two strong reasons for this charge in this and other cases. 1. To avoid the malice of the rulers. It was fear of the fame of His miracles, which at last drove them to put Him to death. John xi. 47–54. 2. To avoid the conceit of the Jews that the Messiah was to be known by these temporal, physical signs of power, and so to gain conquest over their enemies. They would thus be tempted to make seditions and seek to force on Him the sovereignty of the nation. Christians may learn from this not to exalt miracles of *power* above miracles of *grace.* To save and sanctify a soul is a greater deed than to cure a body. The soul lives forever, the other yields to decay and death. The one Jesus would not have published; His spiritual works He would have known and imitated. ¶ *Shew thyself to the priest.* To fulfil the precepts of the law of Moses. As the disease was virtually unclean, the man could not be

4 And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell[a] no man; but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded,[b] for a testimony unto them.

5 ¶ And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion,[c] beseeching him,

6 And saying, Lord, my ser-

a Ch. 9. 30. *b* Lev. 14. 3–10. *c* Lu. 7. 2.

received into the congregation again, until he had done all which the ritual commanded. Lev. xiv. We may see from this how little reason Christians have to fear that the unworthiness of ministers will be any bar to the validity of their acts in the Word and sacraments. Those Jewish priests had corrupted the law of God by their false traditions, yet they sat in Moses' seat, and Jesus orders men to go to them to obey them in their official capacity. Ch. xxiii. 2. See Article xxvi. in Prayer Book. ¶ *Priest.* One who offered sacrifice in the Temple, a descendant of Aaron. Numb. xvi. 40. A priest among the Jews was one of the sacred tribe, whose duty it was, after his solemn consecration and anointing, to teach the people, to pray for them, and especially to offer sacrifices for his own and their sins. Lev. iv. v. vi. Such offices in divine things have always existed, and Noah, Abraham and others were priests of God. They were all types of Christ, the great High Priest of the whole race. Heb. vii. 17; ix. 11–25. The name is still retained in the church, to distinguish the second order of the Christian ministry. Their duty, according to the solemn vows of their ordination, is to instruct the people, and to minister with faithful diligence, the doctrine and sacraments and the discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded. The order is fo nded on the Word of God, and the wants of the human race. It is as necessary in the Church of Christ as ever it was in that dispensation of Moses; and Christian people ought reverently to esteem them and aid them in their office. It was appointed for the perpetual memorial of Christ, for the increase and knowledge of the faith, and for the salvation of mankind. It was a constant employment of Jesus to make the preparation for this sacred order, by instructing the disciples in the time of His earthly ministry. To it He gave the grandest of human duties (John xx. 21–24), and the precious promise of His perpetual presence. Ch. xxviii. 20.

> "So shall the bright succession run
> Through all the courses of the sun;
> Whilst unborn Churches by their care,
> Shall rise and flourish large and fair.

¶ *For a testimony.* That is, a proof to them that you have been cured by the power of God (2 Kings v. 7), for a condemnation of them if they refuse to believe. The word *testimony* is often used of that which will rise to condemn any of wilful and obstinate unbelief. Ch. x. 18. The man wa to hasten, for he had fifty miles to travel, to Jerusalem, and without telling those whom h met by the way of his cure, obtain from the priests the prescribed certificate, that he was truly cured, so that they might, if possible, be convinced of the divine power of the Lord Jesus. Grotius explains it as if Jesus had said, "see thou tell no man till thou hast shown thyself to the priests, lest if a rumo of these things go before thee, they out of envy may deny either that thou wast before a leper, or that thou art now truly cleansed."

5. *Capernaum.* This was now His dwelling-place. See note ch. iv. 13. ¶ *Centurion.* The commander of a century or a body of one hundred soldiers. The Romans had conquered Judea and established divisions of their army in the various provinces. This man had been born a pagan, but as we learn from St. Luke had been very kind to the Jews and perhaps had some convictions of the fundamental truth of their religion. Lu. vii. 2. &c. ¶ Be-

vant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.

7 And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.

8 The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not[a] worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof; but speak the word[b] only, and my servant shall be healed.

a Lu. 15. 19, 21. *b* Ps. 107. 20.

9 For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this *man*, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*.

10 When Jesus heard *it*, he marvelled, and said to them that

seeching. As we would say, praying Him with his whole soul to do this.

6. *The palsy*. See note ch. iv. 24. The servant could not go himself. This miracle is a kind of sequel to the foregoing. In that, the man could go to Jesus. In this he could not, and appeared by his master. Let us pray for mercy for those whom we love by this example.

8. *I am not worthy*. Think of the scene for a moment. On the one side was an officer of a proud and conquering army, accustomed to rule over others with an imperious power, living in a conquered country, one of a race likened by the Almighty to *iron*, for their stern, unyielding military genius. Dan. ii. 40. On the other hand was Jesus, a wandering, poorly clad prophet in his eyes; descended of a carpenter as far as he knew; attended by a few humble followers, going about on foot from village to village of Galilee. The humility, the earnest love for his servant, the *faith* of the centurion in the power and will of Jesus to help him, are grand. The most beautiful touch of the picture is its simple nature. The man is so in earnest, that he does not know, that he is to be seized upon as he stands, by an apostle, to be handed down to the Christian Church as an example of the humility and faith which obtains all it asks.

9. *Under authority*. He was subjected to the Roman Emperor, as also were his soldiers. They obeyed him as having that station over them, in reverence to the Imperial power. So he supposed Jesus to be a prophet under authority of God, and might exercise this control to command the spirits of evil and the diseases of the flesh to submit to His word. "If I can give commands to be executed implicitly at a distance, surely you may much more exercise this distant control over spirits." The servant was "ready to die." Lu. vii. 2. Hence he is too much in earnest to suffer the delay of the journey to his house, when one word can anticipate death and save his servant.

10. *So great faith*. Perfect Christian faith, which worketh in love, and is instructed by all the commands of God, and enlightened by the Holy Spirit, in a regenerate soul, is of a higher kind and degree than this of the Roman officer. Gal. iii. 23–27. There are divers and various meanings to the Scriptural word *faith*. Here it means confidence or belief that Christ, as a good man or prophet, had power to heal his servant, and assurance from his own better feelings that He would do so, if earnestly asked by him. He was a Roman, and may have been partly persuaded of the Jewish religion, or a proselyte of the gate, that is, one of that class of persons who had by baptism and an oath of obedience to the patriarchal creed (Heb. xi. 6), obtained the privilege of living with the Jews with something of a hope of receiving a part in the promises, which were made to Abraham's seed. It is possible, as St. Jerome suggests, that "he may, under the veil of the person of Jesus, have discovered something of His latent divinity." ¶ *No, not in Israel*. Not among the chosen people who boast to be the descendants of him, who wrestled all

followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

11 And I say unto you, That many shall come[a] from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven;

12 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

a Mal. 1. 11.

night with an angel in the form of a man, and would not let him go until his visitor blessed him. It was God the Lord, who appeared to Jacob, and who gave him the name Israel (Gen. xxxii. 28), because "as a *prince* he had power with God." The word *Israel* is made up of two words; *Isra*, to war, to prevail with, and *el*, God, the Strong one. How forcible the rebuke of the mention of this particular name. Jacob has prevailed by his resolution to obtain a blessing; yet the Son of man is prevailed with by the noble faith of one, not of the race of Jacob. The descendants of Jacob were called by this honorable name *Israelites*, till the time of their great schism under Jeroboam. Then, ten tribes were separated, and afterwards they were frequently called by the prophets *Ephraim*, after the younger son of Joseph. Is. vii. 9. They were corrupted by idolatry, and finally fell away from the true faith. The other two tribes were called for convenience *Judah*, from whence the name Jews, which was applied after the return from Babylon, to all the remnants of the tribes who held the right faith and worshipped at the Temple on Mount Zion. Esther iii. 6; Matt. xxviii. 15; Acts xviii. 2. The Jews were misled by pride and prejudices, which this Roman did not feel. He was more ready to seek their own prophet, in his time of trouble, than they themselves, to whom He had especially come. Ch. xv. 22, 24, 28.

11. *East and west.* This phrase, as also the "four winds" (ch. xxiv. 31), signify the whole world. From this instance of Gentile faith, He foretells and prepares them for the doctrine, so hard to be understood by them, that God would yet do away with their prerogatives and offer salvation to all men, without respect to the Mosaic law and the lineal descent from Abraham. Rom. iv. 3; James ii. 23; Gal. iii. 7, 8. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had lived before the law, "by faith," as distinct from the system of Moses. Rom. x. 5, 6, &c. Men would so live again, and, as even the apostles were so long in learning, God would be *no respecter of persons*. Acts x. 34. To sit down with one, as here represented, is to partake of a feast or enjoy a common privilege. Here it is true both of the Church here, which is likened to a supper or feast, (Lu. xiv. 16), and in heaven, whose joys the figure of a marriage feast typifies. Rev. xix. 9. A marriage feast combines many of the ideas which we form of innocent enjoyment and festivity. They are chosen as images of the pure and perfect joys of the blessed, which after all human eloquence is exhausted, are yet beyond our conception.

12. *The children of the kingdom.* A Hebraism, to express the chosen people, the Jews. They were born in the covenant. For them the blessing was intended. They enjoyed every privilege of the Divine Covenant. As a branch of the olive tree, they were the original stock, to which the blessings of grace were first vouchsafed; but, though *children*, they would be rejected and turned out of doors in the darkness of night, where were dogs and thieves and murderers, and where they could only weep with fear and remorse, or gnash their teeth in anger and hatred. But they would not by any means prevail upon the porter to readmit them. Lu. xiii. 24, 25. The imagery is taken from an Eastern street by night. The houses have no windows towards the street, but only high, dead walls. The streets are

13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, *so* be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the self-same hour.

14 ¶ And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever.

15 And he touched her hand,

narrow and without pavements, and generally in a most filthy condition, and occupied by dogs. For a child to be cast out at a time of high festivity, when the lamps shone brightly and all were happy, into the blinding darkness without, with no hope of return, to be exposed to robbers or to be torn to pieces by dogs, presents a dreadful image. Ch. xxii. 13; Rev. xxii. 15. The reality must infinitely exceed it. Jude 13. Jesus begins to teach His disciples step by step the horrors of that lake of fire or second death, into which all who are finally wicked must be cast by the angels. They will weep one while with infinite and eternal sorrow; again they will gnash their teeth in useless rage against their inexorable doom. The Jews did not expect this fate for themselves. They and many lukewarm and worldly Christians will be amazed to find that they will not be able to carry the erroneous judgments of men up to the bar of Christ, as efficient pleas for honor and salvation from the last Judge. Christians are now children of the kingdom by the inestimable privileges of the Covenant of Christ. They are now in a state of salvation, that is, in which they can be saved if they are faithful to the conditions of the Covenant. But let them take warning not to be slothful and presumptuous. They must be holy to be saved.

13. *As thou hast believed.* This does not imply any doubt of his faith, but grants to it the great blessing which it had asked, inasmuch as the faith was great. The Roman had believed wholly. The gift is granted freely. He had cast himself on the mercy of Jesus with a hearty confidence. His reward is in proportion. We may hope that seeking one blessing for his servant, he found a richer one for his own soul. This miracle is recorded as a second kind of mercy, showing another side of the love of Jesus to men. Before, in the first miracle, He healed the man himself who could come. Now He yields to the prayer of the first responsible actor for the dying servant, namely, his master. In the next miracle He blesses a relative of one of His disciples, almost unasked; at least two evangelists do not record the fact of the asking. If we are defiled by sin, let us cry unclean, and pray Him to make us clean. If it has palsied us that we are ready to die, happy is it for us, if our parents, relatives, friends, have grace to pray for us. If one of a Christian family relapses into its fever for a time, while the rest follow with Jesus, He may still recall the wanderer and soothe the passion for evil, while it is yet felt as a weariness and a burden. We learn from this miracle the power of faithful prayer with God. It teaches us to keep in mind, that as the *human heart* of the Son of God was moved and affected by the simple, loving earnestness of this man, so that same Advocate and Mediator sitteth at the right hand of God in heaven, to make intercession for us. Let us pray to Him, and in His name. Let us pray for each other, by the pattern of the Centurion's faith. ¶ *In the self-same hour.* In Greek, *on the very instant.* His faith did not reach so far as to think that Jesus would raise the dead. Therefore he is not farther tried, but the cure is effected on the instant.

14, 15. See also Mark i. 30, 31, and Lu. iv. 38, 39. Simon Peter and Andrew lived together. James and John also were present with them. Luke says that *they*, meaning the disciples present, "besought Him for her:" but Matthew and Mark were not so much struck with the request, it being so natural that they should ask it, as to mention it. It did not appear so great a conquest of faith in those who had

and the fever left her; and she arose, and ministered unto them.

16 ¶ When the even[a] was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with *his* word, and he healed all that were sick:

a Mark 1. 32.

followed Jesus, and seen His power, as it would have been in strangers. The miracle is a part of their home life. It was complete, for she who had been sick, was at once able to attend on them, Theophylact notes on this verse, that marriage is no hindrance to virtue, since the chief of the apostles had a wife. St. Basil reckons among those who were married, "Peter and the rest of the apostles." St. Ambrose saith, "all the apostles, except John and Paul, are said to have had wives." "Bishops, priests, and deacons, are not commanded by God's law, either to vow the estate of a single life, or to abstain from marriage: therefore it is lawful for them, as for all other Christian men, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve better to Godliness." *Article XXXII.* The Romish doctrine and practice on this subject have led to great abuses, which should make us dread their evil ways, and arm our minds with the truths of God's holy word, against all their errors. Their present madness in the idolatry of the Virgin Mary, as a more able advocate in the court of heaven for them, seems an infatuation, resulting from their overweening regard for the superiority of a single life.

16. *When the even was come.* This was the evening of the Sabbath, or Saturday. Mark i. 21—32. The Jews observed their days, from sunset to sunset. Their Sabbath began therefore on Friday at even, and continued till sundown the next day. During its holy hours, they would not even bring the sick to be cured, but waited till the first day of the week had begun. As soon as the sun had gone, they brought them to Jesus. St. Matthew mentions this one evening, to describe at once and summarily, the various miracles of Jesus. He was, however, constantly employed in doing good to the afflicted. We have only a small portion of His deeds and words on record. Those who had friends possessed with devils (see note chap. iv. 24,) or sick, brought them to Him at Capernaum. Perhaps they had come from a distance, hoping to find Him. He cast out the devils "with His word." By this He manifested His power, inasmuch as they were compelled to obey Him; and His goodness, because He destroyed in this manner the kingdom of the evil one. Jesus wrought such works, to convince men then of His mission from God,—to convince us, who live now, of His power to cast out the evil spirits from our hearts, and to restore us whole and sound, to work out our salvation. These supernatural deeds were miraculous, i. e. things *to be wondered at:* the deeds of grace which the Spirit now works, are to be sought for and cherished. Jesus fulfils in this manner, the ancient type of the brazen serpent, which Moses had raised in the desert. As that had healed all who looked upon it, so does He now heal all who come to Him.

17. *That it might be fulfilled.* The words of Is. liii. 4, are, "Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." St. Matthew says the same, as he translates the Hebrew exactly. It is only the translation which differs. The word "infirmities" is put for "griefs," both meaning these calamities of the body, sickness, possession, &c., of which the Evangelist has already spoken. The word "sicknesses" is put instead of "sorrows"—both meaning troubles of the inner man, the heart and mind. The Jews applied this prophecy to the Messias. He took our infirmities, by removing them. Many of them were temporal punishments for sin. He "bare our sicknesses," by offering an atonement for the sins of men, by destroying the power of sin, by reconciling men to God, whom they had offended, by washing them, regenerating

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,[a] Himself took our infirmities, and bare *our* sicknesses.

18 ¶ Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side.

a Is. 53. 4; 1 Pet. 2. 24.

19 And a certain scribe came and said unto him,[c] Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

20 And Jesus said unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head.

b Lu. 9. 57.

them, and giving them the powers of the Holy Ghost, to wean them from sin, sanctify them to God, and incorporate them into His own divine nature. 1 Pet. ii. 24. This doctrine of atonement is the teaching of the Old Testament, in its types, sacrifices, priesthood, ritual, and laws: of the New, in the whole of the gospels, epistles, and the book of Revelation. It is especially drawn out in the Epistle to the Hebrews. We may read it as a doctrine expressed in exact terms, in the second of the thirty-nine Articles. It has been the faith of all Christians, except a mere handful called Arians and Socinians, after the names of their leaders. It seems strange that any can have a doubt of it. And it is unfortunate, for nowhere else on earth can sinful men find a sufficient expiation for sin, or a wholesome balm for their sorrows.

18. *The other side.* Capernaum was on the north-west shore of the sea of Galilee, in the beautiful valley of Gennesaret. See note, ch. iv. 18. He wished to escape from the great crowd, to avoid the suspicion of the rulers, and to suffer the people to return to their homes. He takes a boat to the other side, or the eastern shore, which was a wild desolate place. He would not have His favors engender idleness and vagrancy. It has never been recorded of any other founder of religion, that he avoided making disciples and followers. They have all been only too glad to receive them. But Jesus took greater pains to prevent His followers from adopting the usual measures for exalting Him to a royal position, than all others have made to gain it.

19, 20. *A certain scribe.* This man probably, on seeing the miraculous power of Jesus, and reasoning with himself that He would be able by such tremendous agencies to make all His followers rich and powerful, came to a sudden determination to follow Him. His motive was, at least, selfish. Jesus, who knew all that was in man, instantly laid bare the fault of the man's faith, by setting before him the poverty in which He lived. He thus warned the scribe not to venture his fate with Him on selfish motives. Besides, the scribe came *uncalled.* Jesus *chose* His own immediate followers. They were to be the future witnesses of Him, and He would not suffer any to follow Him, except those whom He saw to be fit for His great work of preaching the Gospel in the midst of worldly opposition. The foxes, the birds, were all supplied with what was needful for them, and had their homes; He was poor and had nothing. He was a wanderer in the world, He lived for a while in Capernaum with His disciples, but He claimed no place for His home, and would never have in His possession the worldly treasures, with which to tempt such interested followers. ¶ *Son of man* Son, in the Hebrew language had various shades of meaning. See note, ch. i. 1. Here it means that Jesus was truly a man, and is used by Him to harmonize with the assertion of the want of a home, of which as man He, like others, felt the need. It belongs to Him in His nature, derived by true conception and birth from the Virgin Mary. "When thou tookest upon thee to deliver man, Thou didst humble Thyself to be born of a

21 And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

22 But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead [a]bury their dead.

a Is. 59. 10; Eph. 2. 1.

Virgin." As Son of God, He was Lord of all things, and had no need of help or home on earth, for His abode is from everlasting to everlasting in the bosom of the Father. He is Creator and Preserver of all things. The word Son of man, He most frequently uses to speak of Himself while on earth. The disciples use the phrase "Son of God:" as was more proper in their mouths. Only St. Stephen calls Him Son of man (Acts vii. 56) when seeing Him ready to receive his soul, at his martyrdom. St. John speaks twice of seeing "one like unto the Son of man" (Rev. i. 13; xiv. 14), taking the phrase from the Prophecies of Daniel. Dan. vii. 13. It is used seventeen times in St. Matthew's Gospel, twelve times in St. Mark's, twenty-one times in St. Luke's, and eleven times in St. John's, and always by Christ of Himself. It is a mark of humility, to teach men that He was truly man of man, and would pass through life and death as other men. Heb. iv. 15; John xii. 34; i. 51.

21, 22. *Another of his disciples.* This word *disciple* signifies one receiving the discipline or instruction of a teacher. It belongs to all who followed Jesus, (John vi. 66; ix. 28,) though more particularly in the Gospels to the Twelve who were afterwards to be the great *Apostles*, to teach in their turn the doctrines of the Church of Christ. See note ch. v. 1. This man had been called by Jesus before he offered this excuse. Lu. ix. 59. His duty was at once to obey, since he had an express and peremptory call. Jesus could even raise his father if he saw fit to do so. He takes advantage of this to teach an important lesson to the remainder of his followers. ¶ *Let the dead*, &c. This was probably a proverbial expression. Let those who are not called by me to preach the Gospel, do the various deeds of common life; your duty is now plain to obey my call. It may seem harsh at first, and as if Jesus intended to cast some contempt on the social duties of life. These, we know, He was first to respect. He wept at the grave of His friend Lazarus (John xi. 35, &c.), and indulgently allowed the grief of others. He now gives this order, to instruct us that a clear call or command of God must be considered the highest duty of man, and must take rank over all others. The dead father would receive the rites of sepulture from his friends, as yet dead spiritually to Christ; but the disciple must not, even for so high a duty, defer the prompt obedience to His plain call to obedience. In St. Luke, ix. 59, He forbids another at the same time with the warning that one must not put his hand to the plough and look back. His design is therefore evidently to impress upon His disciples, and on us, the paramount importance of plain religious duties. But let no one now use this example lightly. A man must have an open, unmistakable command to a religious work, before he can avoid the regular social and family duties which bind him. One who has others dependent on him, may not rush into the ministry or seek a missionary life, if he thereby consigns them to want or poverty. He may go uncalled, and find little blessing in such rash zeal. It is a sad sight, to see Christians neglecting the common duties of daily life, under a mistaken notion of superior piety in so doing. It is not piety, but oftener selfishness or fanaticism. A Christian should be made, by his religion, a better father, husband, wife, or son: otherwise he gives room for serious cavils against his piety.

23. *A ship.* This was a very small open fishing skiff, such as were used on the Sea of Galilee. The vessels of the ancients were none of them large. They were ill calculated to withstand storms, were supplied with small sails, and mostly propelled by oars. There were other smaller boats in company.

23 ¶ And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him.

24 And behold, there[a] arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves; but he was asleep.

a Mark 4. 37; Lu. 8. 23.

25 And his disciples came to *him*, and awoke him, saying, Lord,[b] save us: we perish.

26 And he said unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great[c] calm.

b Ps. 107. 28, *c* Ps. 89. 9; 107. 29.

Mark iv. 36. Being open, they were in great danger of filling with water, in the short chopping waves made by the sudden wind storms of the Lake of Tiberias.

24. *A great tempest.* A strong current is caused in the Sea of Galilee by the river Jordan running through the midst of it in a southerly direction. A violent wind from the southeast, increasing, from the situation of the mountains, to a hurricane, blows directly against this current, and produces very suddenly a frightful and dangerous storm. The waves are high and short; the boat cannot ride above them, but fills with water and founders. See ch. xiv. 24. ¶ *Was covered with the waves.* St. Luke says, "was in jeopardy." The little vessel was foundering, and about to sink. There is hardly any situation in life more certain to fill men with fear, and to deprive them of all presence of mind, than to be in danger of death in a storm on the water. See Ps. cvii. 25–30. ¶ *He was asleep.* It was in the after part of the vessel. It was now night, and Jesus slept after the labors of the day. The disciples should have learned from this very repose that they were safe. They are awake while he sleeps. Afterwards, when real danger comes in Gethsemane, they sleep and He wakes. Could we but learn to fear what Jesus feared, we would fear nothing else. Temptation and sin are worse foes than any physical dangers. The Christian is one striving to fear God most, that he may conquer all other fears.

25. *Save us.* They were in mortal fear. The ship sinking, the wind and waves roaring, the water chilling them and leaping towards them through the darkness like wild beasts, they can only cry to Him, *we perish.* Is not this a picture of some sinful men, who repent of sin under great excitement? Yea, and such may be in a tumult of fears. But it should not be held up as the *rule* or the *example*, for all who seek the way of life, for the disciples certainly never had *less faith* than they manifested at this time. Some souls are converted in storm and tempest, but Jesus did not seek to use such means of gaining followers. He does not use a word to encourage his ministers to their too frequent use of terrors, to bring men to Him. He loves "the waters of Shiloah that go softly" (Is. viii. 6), and only brings the fearful floods to punish the evil doers. It may seem justifiable to some to use any means to convert men, even the excitement of their physical fears, by violent gesticulations, fearful scenery, and midnight assemblies, but the result is almost certainly pernicious. The heart becomes hardened. The means are not *Scriptural*, and sooner or later bring on infidelity.

26. *O ye of little faith.* Matt. vi. 30; xiv. 31. They had some faith or they would not have looked to Him to save them. They had very little, or they would have known that no danger could "come nigh to hurt them" while the Messiah was with them. They might have reasoned, but men in fear do not reason, that if Jesus was to be followed at all as Messiah, then the Messiah could not perish in a midnight storm. They bore His fortunes. So fear and dangers throng the Christian's way; he has faith, for he prays to Jesus; he has little, for he is frightened, and wavers before opposition. Let

27 But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!

28 ¶ And when he was come to the other side, into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way.

29 And behold, they cried out,

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us fear God, and fear nothing else. Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ, but our own wills. Rom. viii. 38, 39. ¶ *Rebuked the winds.* He said to them, "Peace, be still!" To rebuke is to chide with severe words. It is so natural to look upon the winds and waves in such a case as *living* creatures, striving to do mischief, that the word rebuke is the most natural expression. ¶ *A great calm.* In this sea the current of the Jordan is so strong that it soon lays the motion of the waves when the wind has once ceased. This is an instance of the exactness of the evangelists. These minor beauties of their style, which are too simple to have been intentional, are indirect proofs of their honesty.

27. *The men marvelled.* Those in the vessel were astonished at this display of power. They may have seen His miracle on land, and imagined that He had no other power than over single diseases. Or they may have been influenced by the false notion that it was too great a deed for Him, to rule the raging of the sea, a work ascribed to God alone. Ps. lxv. 7; cvii. 25–29. Men are apt to judge of power by size and noise. In one sense it is a greater miracle to save a soul than to guide a storm. ¶ *The winds and the sea obey Him.* The Son of God is Creator. Heb. i. 2, 10. He divided the sea from the dry land by the "word of His power." He who "divided the sea, whose waves roared, the Lord of Hosts is His name." Is. li. 15; Lev. v. 22; Ps. xciii. 3, 4. He now, in form as a man, speaks the same word to rule its raging. These men felt an awful dread of Him, and experienced some little sense of this divine Presence in Him, though they knew not how to express it. They question if He can be a man. To this Saviour we trust in all troubles and dangers, and in death itself. He is with us: nothing can harm us. How beautiful the paraphrase of these verses in the 119th Hymn, written by one who dared all the elements in the service of his master; Bishop Heber. We can all join in the prayer of the last stanza.

"And oh! when the whirlwind of passion is raging.
When, in our hearts its wild warfare is waging
Then send down Thy Spirit, Thy ransomed to cherish,
Rebuke the destroyer; Save, Lord, or we perish."

28. *Country of the Gergesenes.* See Mark v. 1–20; Lu. viii. 26–38. The city of Gergesa or Gerasa was situated on the eastern shore of the sea of Galilee. It is the modern Jerrush, in which are still to be seen signs and relics of its former splendor. The country of the Gergesenes, means the province generally. He landed in their neighborhood. St. Luke calls them Gadarenes, which may have been one of their general names, taken from the town of Gadara, which was also near the sea, about twelve miles distant from the former place. He landed between the two towns, in the country common to both. Such little differences of style are confirmations of the truthfulness of the narrative of the Evangelists. If they had conspired to deceive men, they would have avoided such apparent discrepancies. But each writing only what he knew, and what particularly struck on His own mind in these narratives, would naturally differ in minor matters; thereby confirming, not weakening their evidence as a whole. And in like manner, St. Matthew mentions *two men*, the other Evangelists mention but *one*. This only proves to us that the Divine Master did not intend that the inspiration employed in writing the Holy Books should so overpower all the faculties of the writers as to make

saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?

30 And there was a good way off from them an[a] herd of many swine, feeding.

31 So the devils besought him,

[a] Lev. 11. 7; Deut. 14. 8; Is. 65. 4.

them *unnatural*. They have those varieties of style which *must occur* in all human productions. If they had them not, their style would not be man's style. It would be too perfect, and lose nature, which in all men is imperfect. And losing this, it would actually lose force as evidence. We know therefore that no material error, no falsehood, no corruption, no misstatement was allowed in the writers. Inspiration saved them from all such, and protected them in giving a plain, honest and true narrative. Their apparent differences are the varieties of honest men. Each tells what he particularly noticed; all together tell us the truth as far as is necessary for us—"the things necessary to salvation." St. Mark and St. Luke do not *deny* the presence of the second man. It is likely that one of them was especially furious—the other more silent. Or one may have been a citizen, before this time, of high standing, or possessed of wealth, whose fall and maniacal possession was notorious; the other some stranger, of little repute, who had nothing to make him conspicuous. Many suppositions may be made, but unless we falsely imagine that the Holy Books are *unhumanized* by their inspiration, we have little need to feel anxious for such explanations. The one who cavils at them, will cavil still, until he has met the Saviour, and had the demons of doubt and infidelity cast out of him. ¶ *Possessed with devils.* See note, ch. iv. 24. ¶ *Coming out of the tombs.* They dwelt in these tombs, which were in some cases caves or vaulted rooms hewn out of the solid rock, sufficiently large to furnish shelter for them. Josephus informs us that sometimes robbers made use of them for concealment. Along the eastern shores of the Sea of Galilee, may be still seen the remains of these sepulchral caves in the rocky precipices which face the water. How awful is the end of sin, when these evil spirits so degrade the mind, and rob it of all joy, that the possessed can find no other residence than the dwellings of the dead. St. Chrysostom says that this fact about them is added in allusion to a mischievous opinion that the souls of the dead became demons, and entered into other bodies, and that magicians were accustomed to kill young children, in order to have the aid of their souls. Thus the errors of heathenism result in horrid superstitions. And as a land becomes irreligious, it is found to doubt about monstrous and debasing spiritual phenomena. Religion only can keep us from the gloomy fears of infidelity.

29. *What have we to do with thee?* The Hebrew idiom is, "What is there to us and thee? what have we in common?" It was a usual salutation, when asking any one coming suddenly upon another, the reason of his coming. 2 Sam. xvi. 10; 2 Kings ix. 18. ¶ *Son of God.* "The devils also believe and tremble." James ii. 19. They are subtle spiritual beings, of greater intellectual powers than men, to penetrate into the facts of the eternal world. Though fallen and wicked, yet the great facts of our faith are open to them. They believe, but they will not love. This band of spirits, for they were Legion, are forced by fear to hail Jesus as the Son of God, and to obey Him. Satan scorns the fatuity of unbelief in men, while he promotes it to seek their ruin. The name Legion is taken from a division of the Roman army, and was in number about six thousand. It means, however, any large number. ¶ *Before the time.* Before the day of judgment, which is the time appointed for their punishment in hell. 2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude 6; Rev. xx. 10. Hell is prepared to follow that awful day. Evil spirits and wicked men are not as yet confined in it. The former have

saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine.

32 And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine; and behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.

33 And they that kept them, fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing; and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils.

34 And behold, the whole city

some liberty to range and tempt men to sin, and the latter are kept in the "place of departed spirits" against that last day. Some of these evil spirits are, by a new school of interpreters, thought to have been the souls of wicked men. The devils are in great fear of Jesus, lest he should at once increase their punishment.

30. *A herd of swine.* This was an unclean beast, according to the law of the Jews (Lev. xi. 7; Deut. xiv. 8), and an image of abominable sin. Is. lxv. 4. If, therefore, this herd of two thousand swine (Mk. v. 13) was owned or kept by Jewish owners, it was an act of Divine justice to suffer their destruction.

33. *They that kept them fled.* The keepers were probably not the owners. They flee at the sight of this destruction of their charge, and tell all to the people of the city. This is the only recorded miracle of our Lord which was attended with the loss of property. What may have been the reason of His permission in this case, we can only conjecture. We have no reason to doubt for one moment but that there was a good one, one fully satisfying the minds of His disciples. Otherwise, if it seemed for a moment strange, they would have taken note of the reason, as they often did in other cases of doubt. John ii. 17, 21. When, therefore, we have every reason to feel that a perfectly good cause for this action existed, we must not look to our imagined reasons as absolutely necessary. They are gratuitous. Jesus may have had other intentions than we can now imagine. If we knew them, we would see the mercy of even this permission. We do not know them—we must therefore believe in them. Faith begins where knowledge ends. God often suffers ruin to befall property and life, by storm, hurricane, shipwreck, war, &c. It is His prerogative. This may be a proof to us of the like claim in Jesus. The swine may have been held by Jews, or have been a constant temptation to them, and a cause of vexation and sin. He punishes, then, the guilty owners. Or why may not the possessed have been the owners, and the loss made the price of their cure. Or it may have been to set before the people of the country the great truth of the Gospel, the mercy of God, the evil of sin in striking and memorable signs. The men are cured and found clothed and sitting in their right minds. The devils, who had so long ruled in their land, were evidently driven out of it, causing destruction even to the last. What could preach louder to them than these actions? No other mode of expelling the demons could have so clearly shown, 1. Their malice; 2. Their actual departure. We may read one lesson from the spirits entering the swine, which is now useful, namely, *the reality of such possessions.* Had the men been *mad,* or subject to epileptic or other fits, as the rationalists of this day do vainly talk, the *disease* could in no way have passed into the swine and caused such results. Being devils, they could pass, and they proved their presence by actually entering into brute beasts. Says Dr. Doddridge: "Christ could not have encouraged the notion of real possession more than by His conduct on this occasion; and it is highly probable that this extraordinary occurrence was permitted chiefly to prove the reality of these possessions." It seems very certain that only an overwillingness to find

came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought *him* that he would depart[a] out of their coasts.

a Job 21. 14; Acts 16. 39.

fault, or a secret sympathy for the swine above men, can incline one to find fault with the act. The wretched Gentiles seem to have taken this view, and to have manifested a swinish disposition in taking no note of their countrymen who were restored to them, in their alarm for their herds. Jesus proved by this miracle that he had the same power in every land. It was an opinion of that day that such powers were limited to certain districts. See Numb. xxiii. 13, 27. It may have been one reason for this passage of the sea, that Jesus desired to disabuse the minds of His disciples of this error, and to make it manifest to them that He had power to bless the Gentiles equally as the Jews.

34. *The whole city.* Of Gadara (Luke viii. 37), to which the swineherds had fled. All the people of the city. They were curious to see Him, angry at their loss, yet convinced of the miracle, they dared only to beg His departure. We need no greater proof of the utter unworthiness and stupidity of these citizens. They preferred their swine to the blessed conquest over the demons—their wretched gains to the presence of One so mighty to do good. ¶ *Out of their coasts.* Their country. They were in great fear. Luke viii. 37. This was probably the stratagem of the wicked spirits, and the cause of their wish to be sent into the swine. Often men are prejudiced against the gospel by some false fear which they have conceived. They imagine some evil, some dreadful thing to happen in seeking its ways, and therefore put away from them its blessings. This event teaches us also that avarice and piety are incompatible. "The love of money is the root of all evil." 1 Tim. vi. 10. It cannot flourish in a Christian's heart, without choking the good seed and making it barren and unfruitful. Matt. xiii. 22.

CHAPTER IX.

AND he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city.

We have in this chapter an epitome as it were of *the miracles of Christ.* They are not related in the very order of their occurrence, but are brought together as specimens only of His modes of showing mercy to men. First there is a power manifested over an incurable disease which was present before Him—next, over an absent case as fatal, and more imminent. First He grants mercy to the humble prayer and faith of the sufferer, touches him by an act of healing, as gentle as it is sublime. Next He grants the cure to the humble, earnest prayer of a master for one who is at a distance. Again He raises a sick relative of a disciple, as it were of His own will, in order to bless a friend. Then He is shown triumphing over the complicated ills of humanity, healing all infirmities and sorrows. The scene changes, and He commands the tremendous agencies of nature, the stormy wind and raging sea, and they sink abashed before Him. And lastly He shows His power over the wildest, fiercest demons, which seem to have raged with their greatest power over the guilty and depraved heathen who lived beyond the limits of the holy land. Yet, alas! the chapter ends with an instance of the weakness and folly of man. He is rejected after all, and a few trifling possessions, a love of the things of this life, are valued above the richest blessings of this heavenly visitor.

CHAPTER IX.

1. *Passed over.* He yielded to the wish of the Gadarenes. He visited them no more. When Satan and men combine, they can reject the Lord Jesus, and secure their eternal destruction. Rev. ii. 5. ¶ *His own city.* Capernaum. It became His residence after leaving Nazareth (Matt. iv. 13), for about two years (Mark ii. 1), until He departed to spend the latter portion of His ministry in or near the land of Judea. He went to Jerusalem three

2 And behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying

times a year to the great feasts, but Galilee was the place of His abode.

2. *Sick of the palsy.* See note ch. iv. 24; St. Mark ii. 1–12, and St. Luke v. 17–26. ¶ *Lying on a bed.* On a small mattress, or perhaps only a few blankets, by which the sick man could be more easily transported. It was light, for he afterwards takes it up and carries it away with him. ¶ *Seeing their faith.* He saw *their* faith by the works they did. They came to the house, which was crowded, and they could not get in through the crowd of listeners. Without hesitation, they carry the man up to the roof, which was flat, remove the tiling, and with cords, let him down through it into the immediate presence of Jesus. Mark ii. 4; Luke v. 19. It was a novel and bold act. The sick man looks to Jesus inquiringly, perhaps abashed at the action. Hence Jesus begins with a sentence of pardon of his sins, before He heals him. Doubtless He saw in the man some peculiar signs of penitence, or knew that he had mourned over the sins which had caused his punishment, or He would not have spoken the free pardon that He did.

The Eastern houses differ in many respects from any which we see in our own land. See note ch. xxvi. 56. The climate is hot, and the government so ill able to repress violence, or so apt to promote it by their own officers, that the Orientals have always built their houses with the two objects in view of safety and coolness. Hence they are built in a quadrangle around a square court. The outer walls are made very strong, and sometimes with only a small window toward the street, over the chief entrance, sometimes with no other communication than the door and roof. On the inner side the houses are more open. They are of one story, with flat roofs, and are entered from the street, on one side of the square, by a main entrance, secured by a strong door. Sometimes a smaller door or gate is built in this, to be used in general by the family. The rooms, which are usually one on each side of the quadrangle, open into the court, a flight of stairs leads up to the roof, on which the family frequently assembles in the evenings of summer, often sleeping there. They are used for prayer and meditation. Acts x. 9. A parapet runs around it to prevent falling. In extremely hot weather the centre court is sometimes covered over, by canvass or otherwise. Some think that it was this canvass or temporary roof, which these men removed. But St. Luke speaks distinctly of the *tiling*, by which we mean a permanent roof. Besides this, if the men could get up to the roof at all, and Jesus had been sitting in the court, they could doubtless have attracted His attention below. But He was in one of the rooms. They cannot pass the door. They go up the stairs, to the roof over Him, and making an entrance large enough, succeed in bringing their sick friend into His presence. He saw their faith by their deeds, and to manifest His approval of their zeal, and to bless the deeper, though silent aspirations of the paralytic, as also to confound the proud hearers present, He begins with a title of endearment, *Son*, and a pledge of peace, Son, thy sins—sins known by thee—which brought on this affliction, and for which I know you have now sorrowed—be forgiven thee. As much as the soul is better than the body, it is so far a better and greater miracle to forgive the sins of the soul, than to heal the sickness of the body. But as the former is not visible to the eyes of men, He heals his malady, in order to make the greater miracle perceptible. The miracles as related by St. Matthew, rise one upon the other in import and dignity. ¶ *Be of good cheer.* Do not despair of mercy; or be not alarmed, although yon see the eyes of these proud men turned threateningly upon you. ¶ *Thy sins be forgiven thee.* There was a large company of subtle and learned Jews present. The man was abashed at the boldness of his intrusion, and the knowledge of his guiltly life before this. The sentence is intended

on a bed: and Jesus, seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.

3 And behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This *man* blasphemeth.

4 And Jesus,[a] knowing their

[a] Ps 139. 2; John 2. 24, 25.

to cheer him, and first remove the radical cause of his disease; as also to assert to him and others present, that Christ could forgive the sins of men. It was a belief of the Jews, justified in part by many passages of Scripture, that diseases were the punishments of sin. We know this to be often true now. Violent and indulged passions may shock the nervous system, and produce the first seeds or causes of palsy. Sudden anger has often caused apoplexy. Drunkenness ruins the system and induces disease and death. Prov. xxiii. 29–35. Lechery will destroy the body as well as the soul. Prov. vii. 22, 23. The book of Job is a series of conversations concerning this very subject, whether such afflictions as Job's were *always* the punishments of great sins. Deut. xxviii. 20, 21; 2 Sam. xii. 13; xxiv. 13; 2 Chron. vii. 14; Isa xxxiii. 24; and 1 Cor. xi. 30, and James v. 15. This man may have been a great sinner, and by some violent act of sin, may have, evidently to himself and others, been visited by God in punishment. It was necessary, therefore, for Jesus to remove first, the causes of his palsy, namely the guilt of sin, and thus to prepare the way to a cure. Otherwise the man may have lost the impression, that if he continued in the same sins, they would recall his guilt, and thereby his malady. His health became, as it were, a constant reminder to him, to sin no more, lest a worse thing should come upon him. Our Lord also asserts, which probably has caused this insertion of the miracle in this place, that the forgiveness of sins was now to be committed to Him *as man*, that is *ministerially*, that He might organize the constant means of forgiveness for all mankind. And though the hearers thought that He blasphemed, i. e., that He arrogated falsely a *power of God*, Jesus leaves them to think this of Him, and works the miracle to prove His assertion. The miracle establishes two important doctrines. 1. That He was God, for He forgives sins judicially, in His own name alone, which power belongs to God alone. 2. That to Him, as *man*, this power was committed for its ministration. From both these doctrines result a vast portion of Christian faith and practice. From the former we believe that our sins are truly pardoned; from the latter we receive the signs and seals of it for our daily encouragement.

3. *Blasphemeth.* This was a serious charge, for the crime was punishable by death. Lev. xxiv. 16. The Jews attempted to convict Jesus of it at the last, and make it a plea for destroying Him. See notes ch. xxvi. 65. To blaspheme in the Scripture sense, denotes improper and unworthy speeches against God, His attributes, works or temple; to ascribe to God the weaknesses of men, or to attribute to men the perfections and operations of God. It is here used in the latter sense. If Jesus had not been God, it would have been a true charge. If He had been only a man, it is impossible to conceive that a "jealous God" could have suffered Him to cure a palsy, with the express object of proving that He was thus "equal with God" in the right to forgive sins. How could they—how can any now believe the Scriptures, and hesitate to fall down and kneel before "God manifest in the flesh!" To forgive sins belongs to God alone. Is. xliii. 25; xliv. 24. Against Him have we offended, and to Him alone we must go for pardon. Whatever ministrations may be established for certain ends, "to God only it appertaineth to forgive sins." Christ is therefore truly the Son of God, since he has claimed this unlimited power, and proved His right by a miracle. See Mark ii. 7.

4. *Knowing their thoughts.* This is a second miraculous or divine gift. Mark

thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?

5 For whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?

6 But that ye may know that the Son of man[b] hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.

7 And he arose, and departed to his house.

8 But when the multitude saw *it*, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.

9 ¶ And as Jesus passed forth

a Acts 5. 31; 13. 38; Eph. 1. 7.

says, "Jesus perceived in His spirit that they so reasoned within themselves." He shows them by this supernatural knowledge of their own unuttered thoughts, that He had before spoken to the sick person, "knowing what was in man," and with authority. This knowledge was purely divine. 1 Chron. xxviii. 9; Ps. cxxxix. 7, &c.; Rom. viii. 27; Rev. ii. 23.

6. *Power on earth.* He says, *the Son of Man*, which words imply His Messianic nature, God and man. He claims this power on earth, since God had sent Him to be the source and means of forgiveness and salvation to all mankind. Acts ii. 38; x. 43; xiii. 38; Col. i. 14. This power He exercised in forgiving men and releasing them from the temporal punishment of sin, while in His humiliation on this earth. Lu. xxiii. 34; vii. 47. After His Atonement on the cross and Ascension into heaven, He gave the richer gifts of spiritual release from all guilt, and absolute sanctification of the soul. ¶ *Take up thy bed, &c.* This action proved that the cure was perfect. As the man had been a subject of faith in being brought to Him, he must now give proof of obedience by departing to his home.

8. *Glorified God.* That is, they praised Him in words, they spoke to each other of His wonderful gift, and devoutly honored His mercy. They were mostly struck by the miracle done in the body of the paralytic. ¶ *Such power unto men.* Their ideas were erroneous and imperfect, but they had a glimpse of the wonderful work and mission of Jesus. The scribes were silent and hardened themselves in their doubts. "The sight of Christ's miracles is not sufficient to work faith in the soul, but requires the concurring operation of the Holy Spirit; the one may make us *marvel*, the other must make us *believe*."—*Burkitt.* We sometimes imagine falsely that if *we* had lived in those days and seen the miracles of Jesus, we would have found it easy to believe in Him, easy to realize His power and grace in the soul. But we may take warning from this and like instances, and be sure that our opportunities of faith are not inferior now to theirs. If we will submit to Jesus and believe in Him, we may.

9. *The receipt of custom.* The place of receiving custom; the toll-house. He was a toll-collector or publican. See Note ch. v. 47, and *Introduction* to this Gospel. St. Mark ii. 14, and St. Luke v. 27, 28, call him Levi. It was common among the Jews for a man to have two names. Peter was also called Simon and Cephas, and Lebbeus had a surname Thaddæus. He collected toll of those crossing the lake, or possibly a tax on the vessels of the port. It was by the "sea-side" that Jesus found him. ¶ *Arose and followed him.* Matthew was the writer of this Gospel. How unselfish the spirit in which he speaks of himself. He does not stop to mention, as St Luke has done of him, that "*he left all*" to follow Christ. St. Matthew must have known Jesus, whose abode was at this time in Capernaum. He differed from other publicans, who were notoriously cruel and avaricious; otherwise his extortions would have hindered his immediate obedience. He

from thence, he saw a man named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.

10 ¶ And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples.

left all; but he could leave it, since he left no wrongs or exactions to be repaired, no dishonesty to be made good by refunding what he had unrighteously taken. Some are willing to leave all, when their all is very little. They must also make *reparation*, before they can be safe. There were some honest publicans: Zaccheus and St. Matthew. He was prepared by this honesty, and also by some knowledge of Jesus, to follow Him. We are not to suppose that he began to follow Christ with clear spiritual ideas of His work; for we repeat, that till the last appearance of Jesus to them, the disciples desired and dreamed only of a temporal kingdom (Acts i. 6); enough that from obedience in the first instance, he arrived at the illumination of the Pentecost in the sequel. Thus, while we *obey*, we are on the way to knowledge and grace, above all that we either desire or deserve. Let us pray God "to grant us grace to forsake all covetous desires and inordinate love of riches, and to follow His Son Jesus Christ *wheresoever* he may lead us." See Collect for St. Matthew's day, September 21. Many a Christian can look back with wonder at the little faith with which he began his Christian course, and behold in his own chequered life the marvellous leadings of the Holy Spirit, by which he has been gradually made wise unto salvation.

10. *In the house.* St. Matthew does not mention that he himself was the giver of this feast. Lu. v. 29. It is a grace sometimes to *forget* ourselves. Ch. vi. 3. ¶ *Sat at meat.* The original is, while *they were reclining;* that is, on the couches around a table at the feast. The Jews did not sit at their feasts, but reclined on couches around a table, shaped after the manner of the three sides of a square, and called a Triclinum. ¶ *Publicans and sinners.* Notoriously *low* and despised people. The word sinners means a *class* of people, such as were impious and profane; such as did not obey all the traditions of the Pharisees, nor attend to the fulfilment of the duties and sacrifices of the Temple. The Hebrew word which corresponds to the English *sinners*, means persons careless of religion and more or less of a profligate life. Ps. i. 1. They were men really sinners, yet little cared for by others, Publicans were also sinners. Theocritus, a heathen writer, in one sentence shows their standing. He says that "bears and lions were the most savage beasts in the mountains, but in the cities publicans and sycophants." The strict Jew would not be seen eating with such men. Acts x. 28. In one sense all men are sinners; but here the word means those who openly and wilfully break the laws of religion, or lawless men. There are many in all ages who are not found in this class.

11. *Why, &c.* To partake of their hospitality implied friendship for them, and was a pollution in the view of the Jews. They often blamed Jesus for this condescension, as something strange and outrageous. See in Luke xviii. 10, the true picture of the pride of the Pharisees. They put this question to the disciples, perhaps to shame and perplex them. They may have feared to ask Jesus; or they may not have dared to show the multitude their contempt of them. They fancied themselves infinitely removed from all such persons, and, in their spiritual pride could not explain the conduct of Jesus.

12. *They that be whole, &c.* He came to save all sinners who would repent. It was necessary that He should go among them, especially among such as from their poverty and despised condition, were overlooked by their appointed teachers. The physician must visit the sick, even when he may have reason to fear contagious diseases, and the phy-

11 And when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans[a] and sinners?

12 But when Jesus heard *that*, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

13 But go ye and learn what *that* meaneth, I[b] will have mercy,

a Lu. 7. 34, 37, 39; Gal. 2. 15.

b Hos. 6. 6.

sician of souls must not fear such opinions of evil minded men, when seeking to "save them that are lost." The Pharisees were by no means *whole*. They were unsound in faith and practice, but they had the art to seem righteous. Ch. xxiii. 29. They thought that Jesus could do nothing for them, to make them holier. Hence He tells them that according to their own estimate of men, they ought not to wonder that He should go to such as needed religious instruction. The reader may be warned here, that the comparison which is made so often in the gospels of whole and sick, righteous and sinners, is not in the strict meaning of these words, as abstractly defined, but as they are used in every day life. In the former sense none are whole or righteous; in the latter, Zacharias and his wife (Luke i. 6), Simeon (Luke ii. 25), Joseph the counsellor (Lu. xxiii. 50), and others were righteous persons. There were some Jews, like Zacharias and Timothy, needing spiritual enlightenment and Christian regeneration, who would still have need only to walk as holily under new light as they had done under the former dispensation, to obtain salvation. Mark vi. 20; ii. 17. Says Bp. Tomline, "The word sinners, in this text, imports such persons as live in the customary practice of sin, so that the tenor of their lives is wicked, and who are therefore to be called to that repentance, which consists in the change of their lives from the service of sin to holiness: and therefore, by the righteous, we are not to understand those who are entirely free from sin—for in this sense there is not a righteous man on the earth—but those who are truly and sincerely righteous, have truly reformed their lives, carefully endeavor to abstain from all known sins, and set themselves sincerely to the performance of their whole duty, both to God and man: and so are righteous and acceptable in the sight of God."

13. *But go, &c.* The words cited are from the prophet Hosea vi. 6. They mean that, when the two things are to be compared, or are in any instance opposed, God prefers, the spiritual principles of love and good will, here called mercy, before the positive precepts, or external acts of worship. Preceptive religion is not an end, but a means to spiritual, and is inferior to it. In the rare cases where a moral duty is clearly incompatible with a precept, He prefers the former. David and his company ate the sacred bread of the temple, which only priests were allowed to eat, in a case when that food was to keep them from starving. Ch. xii. 4. The Jews in the time of the Maccabees were compelled, against their first convictions to adopt the resolution to fight a battle, if they should be attacked by the heathen on the Sabbath day. 1 Maccabees ii. 41. Sacrifices were the beasts slain by the priests, and offered on the altar to God. They were strictly commanded by Jehovah. Yet David saw in the spirit, that God loved the service of the heart, and meant to promote it by means of the sacrifices. Ps. li. 16, 17; Is. i. 11–18. But when the precepts of religion, appointed for a certain end, or for external service, do not contravene the moral duties, they are by no means to be set aside for any plea of conscience. External worship, in its own place and time, is as necessary as spiritual worship. Without the spirit of obedience and truth, it is mockery; with it, is useful and blessed. ¶ *Not come to call, &c.* He came of course to call all, both righteous and sinners, all classes of people, to a new spiritual kingdom, by repentance. But to *repentance* specially, i. e. to a plain, pub-

and not sacrifice; for I am not come to call the [a]righteous, but sinnners to repentance.

14 ¶ Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?

15 And Jesus said unto them,

[a] Acts 10. 22; 8. 36, 37.

lic, turning from the error of their ways, their immorality, vice and irreligion, He called especially such men as He was then in company with. All men are to be converted. Those who are openly profane, are to turn from their sins at once. The change must be marked. All who are moral must still repent of their sins against conscience and God, and seek for pardon.

14. *Fast oft.* See Mark ii. 18–22; Luke v. 33–39. They fasted twice in the week, on Mondays and Thursdays. Luke xviii. 12. Besides they observed the national fasts four times in the year. Zech. viii. 19. See note ch. vi. 16. John the Baptist was at this time in prison. He was a prophet, and had come to perform a special mission. His teachings and life therefore, in all respects, were those of *a pious Jew.* He had no right to change any of the customs of Moses, nor is it at all likely that he had any notion of the great change which would be made in those customs by the Messiah. Therefore his disciples were taught to obey the usual customs and precepts of the Old Testament. They did as pious Jews should have done; obeyed the laws and prevalent customs of the nation as they found them. Knowing, however, that Christ had been pointed out as a messenger from God, they could not discover why He should neglect a practice so proper for pious persons. And grieved by the absence and imprisonment of their prophet, they felt hurt at a change which they knew not how to justify to others. John had come "neither eating nor drinking;" that is, he practised all the asceticism of a severely pious prophet. Jesus came in a different manner. He lived as other men, mingled with them in their daily life, and disregarded those peculiar customs which He was so soon to abrogate. It may have been a fast day on which this feast had been made. If so these followers of the stern prophet may have implied a complaint in their question—that such men as were then with Jesus, would learn to despise the custom of fasting, and think lightly of so good a man as John, who had practised it. How gentle and satisfactory is the explanation made to them. Those illustrations teach them the intention of Jesus, an intention which at that date was hardly conceivable by any of the Jews; that Christ came to put away the ceremonial observances of Moses, and to begin a new dispensation. He says nothing against *fasting.* He foretells that it would still be observed in His kingdom. Only He would change the face of things, so that Christians should have other reasons for it, and fast on other grounds than they did. The Pharisees for the nonce make common cause with the disciples of John, in this question. They were all rigid observers of Jewish customs.

15. *Children of the bridechamber.* These were the attendants upon the bridegroom, and his particular friends. A Jewish wedding lasted for seven days, during which all gave themselves up to joy and feasting. Jesus was to them all and more, than a bridegroom could be to his friends. They had greater reasons to rejoice in His presence. And as Christian fasts could only be on grounds of mourning peculiar to Christians mourning for the absence of their Lord, those grounds could only appear after He had left them. As they fasted twice a week, on Thursday to commemorate the day when Moses went up on Mount Sinai; and on Monday, in memory of his coming down—thus recalling their reasons for honoring the Law, so Christians would yet fast on Wednesday, the day when Jesus was betrayed, and on Friday, the day when He was crucified.

Can the children of the bride-chamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the[a] days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.

16 No man putteth a piece of new[‖] cloth unto an old garment:

[a] John 3. 29.

[‖] or, *raw* or *unwrought cloth.*

But they could not fast while He was with them. He was greater than Moses, and His presence must forbid fasts. ¶ *Then will they fast.* The practice could not be more a duty, if He had said—then *shall* they fast, for He declares what He expected, which is in this case the same as saying that He wished it. It is in vain to seek to escape from the clear inference that Christians ought to show this honor to their absent master. Notice that the word mourn is used as meaning the same as fast. It is the reason for fasting. Mourning for sin and for the widowhood of the Church, is a sufficient reason for the custom. See note ch. vi. 16–18. The great occupation of fast days should be meditations on Christ and His sufferings, sorrow for sin, prayers for pardon and the safety and prosperity of the Church, and the return of the bridegroom.

16. *New cloth.* New cloth was that which had not been properly dressed and finished. If it should be put into an old garment, it would look unseemly, would shrink and tear away from the other, so making the rent worse than before. The old garment was the Jewish system—then waxed "old and ready to vanish away." Heb. viii. 13. The new piece represented the Gospel, which could not be adapted to the Jewish dispensation, going as it did on other principles, and filling a wider space. The very disciples tried long to adapt the two, until the Spirit of God taught them the true meaning of the latter. Acts xi. 18. The whole life and labors of St. Paul were given to the work of resisting the attempt to make Christianity subserve Judaism. The epistles to Rome and Galatia are filled with remonstrances against it. Rom. iii. 21, 22; Gal. ii. 16. Or it may mean that Jesus would not impose on the disciples, who were yet but weak in faith, and but partially informed, any severe and self-denying regulations. He would wait till they were ready for this, through grace.

17. *Old bottles.* Bottles in the east, and still in the rocky isle of Madeira, are made of the whole skin of a goat or sheep. It was taken off entire, and carefully prepared. Uncouth as it may seem to us, these leathern bottles are admirably fitted for their use. The Orientals have no other mode of transporting wines and other liquids across the deserts of the east, but the camel, and its rough jolting gait would soon break in pieces any other substance. In Madeira, the wine is raised on the little clefts and terraces of the precipitous mountains, and must be borne over the rocky paths on the shoulders of men. These bottles are of course soon relaxed and weakened. If new wine should be put in them in this state, it bursts them by its fermenting. To withstand the power of the fermentation, new and strong skins must be employed. Josh. ix. 4; Job. xxxii. 19; Ps. cxix, 83. How apt is this illustration to the subject. How powerfully did the Gospel resist the attempts to confine it to the limits of the Judaical system. The Jews themselves used this figure of its power. Acts ii. 13. It sprang up in the midst of Judaism, but before a generation passed, it had burst its feeble bonds, and been borne to the most distant nations of the world. The preceding verses, 9–13, are selected by our ritual for the twenty-first of September, the feast of St. Matthew. It contains his call, and teaches us the humanizing spirit of the Gospel. The blessed promise of salvation condescends to men of low estate, mingles with their daily thoughts, and gives them a sense of a newer and better life. St. Matthew is worthy of remembrance. He was self-denying, humble, attentive and faithful. Though he has written the life of his

for that which is put in to fill it up, taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse.

17 Neither do men put new wine into old[a] bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles [b]perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

18 ¶ [c] While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.

19 And Jesus arose, and followed him, and *so did* his disciples.

20 ¶ And behold, a woman

a Josh. 9. 4. *b* Gal. 5. 12.

c Mark 5. 22; Lu. 8. 41.

Master, he has found no historian to tell us the events of his own life—content apparently to think that his name was enrolled in the Lamb's Book of Life. The little which is known of him is recorded in the Introduction. See too ch. x. 3; Mk. ii. 14, 15; iii. 18; Lu. v. 28; Acts i. 13. How weak and poor a thing is human fame, when it could preserve so little of the lives of twelve men, who carried to all lands the boon of the Gospel.

18. *A certain ruler.* Jairus a ruler of the synagogue. See Mk. v. 22; Lu. viii. 41. He was one of the principal men of his synagogue. See note, ch. v. 22. ¶ *My daughter is even now dead.* He also said that *she was at the point to die*, as St. Mark and St. Luke have recorded it. The Evangelists agree perfectly with each other, as the event shows, although one has recorded one exclamation, and two have given another. A man in such great distress would express himself by both phrases, "Sir, my daughter is dying—I left her just expiring; I know that she must be even now dead, though I have hastened to find you." The ruler being a Jew, had two instances in his own Scriptures to justify his request. 1 Kings xvii. 17–23; 2 Kings iv. 32–37. Elijah and Elisha had recalled by prayer the spirits of two young children; and in both cases, they joined with their prayers, the act of putting their hands upon them. He thought therefore that Jesus could do the same, and thought it necessary that He too should *lay His hand upon her* to bring her to life. St. Luke says that she was an only daughter, and was twelve years of age. ¶ *And she shall live.* This was his faith. Jesus, who could have spoken the word as He had before done, is guided by the faith of this pious Jew, and condescends to follow without a comment the examples of the ancient prophets.

20. *A woman*, &c. This disease was pronounced unclean by the Levitical law. Lev. xv. 25. Every thing which she touched was made unclean. It was therefore a brave act in her, a venture of large affection and trust in the *mercy* of Jesus, to touch the uttermost edge of the garment of a prophet. Had she not *believed*, it would merit a worse name. She touches not His person, but is content to touch the extremity of His robe. Her faith is humble and discreet, as well as brave. It was her only chance, for she in vain had spent all her property in seeking a cure. Something she thought would be pardoned in a desperate courage. ¶ *The hem of His garment.* This was an outer garment or cloak, worn loosely over the shoulders. See Note ch. v. 38. The fringe of it was a Jewish badge of distinction, to mark them as separate from the Gentiles, which the Jews were commanded to wear. Numb. xv. 38; Deut. xxii. 12. The touch was no sooner made than she was cured. Mk. v. 39; Lu. viii. 44.

22. *When He saw her.* The other Evangelists relate other particulars. Jesus asked who touched him; the disciples wonder at the question; the woman, fearing and trembling, comes forward and tells him the truth. Hence the words "be of good comfort," as a mark of pardon for what had seemed too

which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind *him*, and touched the hem of his garment.

21 For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.

22 But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith[a] hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.

23 And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise,

24 He said unto them, Give

a Lu. 7. 50; 17. 19; 18. 42.

daring. Faith may often venture with a Saviour. He calls her *daughter*, a term of affection. She had not suffered the twelve long weary years for naught, when they brought her at last to receive a Saviour's comforting.

23. *The minstrels*, &c. These were in the court and lower rooms; the corpse being usually laid out in the upper chamber. Minstrels or pipers and hired mourners were commonly employed in the East, to chant mournful dirges around the dead, and recite their praises, their virtues, and the events of their lives. In all simple and imaginative nations, their passions manifest themselves more in expressive actions than among the people of Saxon descent. Even the Africans of the Southern States spend the night with a corpse of one of their own color in chants and hymns, and follow it in the same manner to the grave at early dawn. The ancient Pagans used violent and cruel rites at such a time. They cut themselves, tore out their hair, made loud lamentations. Jer. ix. 17; xvi. 6, 7; Ezek. xxiv. 17. They hired others to wail over their dead. Amos v. 16; Lev. ix. 20. The Jews were forbidden to do violence to their persons. Lev. xix. 28; Deut. xiv. 1. They had recourse to many ways of expressing grief. See Job i. 20; ii. 12; 2 Sam. i. 2–4; xiv. 2; xv. 30. Though these rites seem unworthy to us, our silence and self-control would doubtless appear heartless to them. National customs will always differ, yet nature remain the same. It was natural for the Orientals to employ persons to chant dirges and lamentations over their dead.

34. *But sleepeth.* Saith St. Jerome, "mortua est vobis, Mihi dormit." To you she is dead, to Me she only sleeps. The damsel was truly dead, that is, life was extinct. The same language is used, John xi. 11, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth,"—and the sacred writers use the same word to express the state of the departed. Acts vii. 60; 2 Pet. iii. 4; 1 Cor. xv. 6–18; 1 Thess. xiv. 13–15. It is thought by some that Jesus means to imply a special and singular circumstance of these cases, which He recalled to life, and to intimate that their souls were preserved in transition, till He should recall them. But why then do the apostles use the same word of all the pious dead? They would have it that she slept, in the sense that she would awake after the usual time of a sleep. But Lazarus had been dead *four days*, and decay had begun its work. Again, the Jesuits attempt to fix on Christ their dangerous doctrine of *mental reservation*, as if He had reserved His meaning thus: "She sleeps—in respect of My power." Would that they made no worse use of their pernicious dogma of reserve. It seems best therefore to consider the word as used by analogy, for the usual condition of the departed. "They *rest* from their labors." They sleep as to the cares and temptations which vexed them here. They are with Christ in joy and felicity, being delivered from the burden of the flesh; and in a calm tranquillity their bodiless spirits await their perfect consummation and bliss both in body and soul, in eternal and everlasting glory. And if we bear in mind that they do not go at once into this resurrection-state, we will feel no

place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth.[a] And they laughed him to scorn.

25 But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the[b] hand, and the maid arose.

26 And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.

27 ¶ And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, *Thou* son[c] of David, have mercy on us.

28 And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord.

29 Then touched he their eyes,

a Acts 20. 10. *b* 2 Kings 4. 34.

b Ch. 15, 22, and 20, 30, 31.

difficulty in their being recalled to life. Let us guard against another error. This maid, the widow's son, Lazarus, and "the bodies of many saints which slept," and which arose after the crucifixion, were *only revivified*, or *recalled to this life*— not raised to that eternal life which knows no after decay. They all died again. Jesus rose by the true resurrection, "the first fruits of the dead." No mortals have yet risen in that spiritual body, like unto His glorious body, of which the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians speaks. See Acts ii. 34; Heb. xi. 39, 40.

25. *Put forth.* He admitted only the parents of the girl with the three disciples, Peter, James and John. Mark v. 37–40. The same disciples afterwards were with him in the mount of Transfiguration, when His glory appeared (Mark ix. 2.; 2 Peter i. 16, 18), and in Gethsemane. Mark xiv. 33. These five were sufficient as witnesses of the mode and fact of His recalling the damsel to life. When she appeared again alive, others would be compelled to believe that she had been truly dead; and likewise, that she, as far as the power of Christ was concerned, was at the time truly asleep. The miracle assures us that the declaration of Christ is true, that we also shall only be as men asleep; that we shall start into life when He "shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." 1 Thess. iv. 16. See John xi. 25, 26. The spirits of the departed, however, sleep to the troubles and anxiety of this life only. They have an entire consciousness of the great facts of the spiritual world, They are either rejoicing in hope of future reward, or kept in chains of darkness against the future day of punishment. They enjoy the bliss which a more peculiar presence of Christ gives, or suffer the agony of despair. St. Paul intimates (Heb. xii. 1) that they behold and sympathize with the saints who are struggling on earth to join them.

27. *Son of David.* Thus follows, link on link, the chain of miracles; palsy, uncleanness, death, blindness, all striking analogies of the power of sin over the souls of men. By this confession they acknowledge Him to be the Messiah. It is now used for the first time, since it was spoken of Him by the angel Gabriel, before His birth. Lu. i. 32. The Jews allowed that the Messiah or Christ would be the son of David (ch. xxii. 42; John vii. 42), only they were unwilling to believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ. It was this unwillingness which led the multitude to rebuke this cry of two other blind men, recorded ch. xx. 31, &c. Isaiah had foretold that Christ would be known by these merciful miracles. Is. xxix. 18; xxxv. 5; xlii. 7. Poverty and blindness had taught these men a grand lesson, which their rulers could never learn. Misfortune and affliction are now often angels of light in disguise. They teach unearthly wisdom to the Christian.

28. *Believe ye, &c.* He questioned them on their faith in His power to do this particular miracle. Otherwise, they, and the rest who heard them,

saying, According to your faith, be it unto you.

30 And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying,[a] See *that* no man know *it*.

31 But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country.

32 ¶ As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil.

33 And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel.

34 But the Pharisees said,[b] He casteth out devils, through the prince of the devils.

35 And Jesus went[c] about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness, and every disease among the people.

36 ¶ But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted,‖ and were scattered abroad, as[d] sheep having no shepherd.

37 Then said he unto the disciples, The harvest[e] truly *is* plenteous, but the labourers *are* few.

38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

a Ch. 12. 16. *b* Ch. 12. 24; Mark 3. 22; Lu. 11. 15. *c* Ch. 4. 23.

‖ or, *were tired and lay down.* *d* 1 Kings 22. 17; Ez. 24. 1–6. *e* Lu. 10. 2; John 4. 35.

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might have gone away in a great error. They would have thought that the *general* confession of faith in Him, perhaps that this flattering title had procured a cure; whereas, it was the particular faith which felt its want; which saw in Jesus, not only the glories of the Messiah, but the power of a Saviour, suited to those wants. A right confession is all important—but we must also have a particular, experimental or individual confidence in Jesus, as able and willing to be *our* Saviour. He holds up before us our woe and sin until we feel it and mourn for it, that He may pardon it, and make us humble and grateful.

30. *See, &c.* See note ch. viii. 4.

34. *Prince of devils.* The Pharisees were partaking very much of his spirit, when they so grossly and wickedly yielded to their pride; and, while confessing the reality of the glorious miracles of Jesus, yet, attributed them to a devil. See ch. xii. 24, &c.

35. *Gospel, &c.* See note ch. iii. 2.

36. *They fainted.* Sheep, in hot climates, suffer excessively from the mid-day heats. If left to themselves they wander in the morning on the plains; the noon finds them remote from shade or water; they pant with the heat of their heavy fleece, and sink down weary and ready to die. The shepherd takes care, that they keep near the green pastures and still waters, that at mid-day they may be protected and refreshed. A flock of sheep was often made the emblem of the chosen people; and their distressed condition, when wanting governors and teachers of a righteous and pious spirit, was expressed by their "having no shepherd." Numb. xxvii. 17.

38. *Pray ye, therefore.* It is the duty of all Christians to pray that *laborers, i. e.* faithful ministers, may be raised up to go into the harvest and gather souls unto salvation. In the harvest, when the grain is ripe, men go in with sickles and gather it, bind it into bundles to be kept in the garners; leaving the tares to be burned. So the world at that time was likened to a harvest, because men were ripe for knowledge, ready to hear, and in many instances to be saved. Only teachers were wanting to instruct them in the "Gospel of the kingdom." Jesus immediately (ch. x.) appoints and sends on a short mission the twelve

CHAPTER X.

AND when he had called unto *him* his twelve disciples, he gave them power ‖*against* unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease.

2 Now the names of the twelve

‖ or, *over*.

disciples. The church has instructed us in the prayers for the Ember weeks, which happen four times in the year, *how* we should pray to Christ for a godly clergy. The Hymns for Ordination (97–100) teach us the same. The Saviour "continued all night in prayer to God" (Lu. vi. 12), before He chose the twelve. We now should observe these seasons, called *Ember*, from the ancient practice of strewing the churches with ashes and embers on days of fasting. Prayer for a faithful ministry is of great importance, now when the world is so given to false doctrine, contention, and ignorance of divine things.

"Almighty God, the giver of all good gifts, who of Thy Divine providence hast appointed divers orders in Thy Church: give Thy grace, we humbly beseech Thee, to all those who are to be called to any office and administration in the same; and so replenish them with the truth of Thy doctrine, and endue them with innocency of life, that they may faithfully serve before Thee, to the glory of Thy Name and the benefit of Thy holy Church, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*"

CHAPTER X.

1. *And when, &c.* Following miracles of power, come the steps taken for the perpetual *miracles of grace.* See also Mark vi. 7; Luke ix. 1. Jesus had before this chosen twelve of His disciples (Mark iii. 14; Luke vi. 13), to be His more intimate friends and witnesses (Acts i. 21, 22), who were afterwards to become the messengers of His Gospel. The name disciples or *learners*, belonged to them, while He was upon earth, instructing and preparing them. After His Ascension they were to be independent teachers of others, and were called *Apostles*, or *those sent*, i. e. *messengers.* In this same sense, the word *angels*, which is literally *messengers*, is used in Rev. i. 20, of the Bishops of the seven churches of Asia, who were successors of the Apostles. His present sending them forth to travel over the land of Judea and Galilee, is to be carefully distinguished from their final mission to the world. This was a brief experimental mission for about two months,—that was a life-long service, as "ambassadors of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God." 1 Cor. iv. 1. In this they knew very little of spiritual things; in that, they established and built up the Church. Jesus imparts to them powers which manifest His divine nature. No other than God can give such gifts unto men, of His own will and authority.

The office of Apostle has become much obscured by ignorance in this age. They were the first order of ministers, answering to our Bishops. The Fathers expressly declare that the name Apostle was given up in the age after Christ, and Bishop used in place of it, out of a nice regard and reverence to the original twelve. *The office and authority they tell us remained.* The seventy are thought to have been the second class of ministers, afterwards called presbyters or elders. And the deacons were either in existence before, or were appointed as is related in Acts vi. There were at first twelve Apostles, perhaps limited to this from the number of the twelve tribes. Ch. xix. 28. Judas by transgression fell, and Matthias was chosen in his room. Afterwards Paul was miraculously called to be the Apostle to the Gentiles. The name is used of others, until we may reckon twenty-four termed Apostles, in the New Testament. For instance, Barnabas (Acts. xiv.), Epaphroditus (Phil. ii. 25), Timothy and Silvanus (1 Thess. ii. 6.). But soon after the canon of Scripture was closed, their

apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother;

3 Philip, and Bartholomew;

successors in the government of the Church were called *Bishops*, as they have continued to be until the present day, according to the declaration of the Prayer Book: "It is evident unto all men reading Holy Scripture and ancient authors, that from the Apostles' times, there have been three orders of ministers in Christ's Church—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons."* Jesus now begins to organize the great System of Redemption, and instruct the twelve to this one end. He is the chief Corner-stone; they also are to be set as the foundation stones of His spiritual temple, being witnesses to the great mysteries of the faith. The original twelve possessed incidental powers of inspiration, prophecy and miracles. These have ceased. But their *greater powers* of being instruments of salvation to men, "stewards of the spiritual mysteries of God," *have* not and *can* not ever cease.

2. *The names.* See Mark iii. 13, 18; Lu. vi. 12, 19. This call was made upon a mountain (the mount of Beatitudes, in Galilee), and with much solemnity, after a night spent in prayer to God. ¶ *Peter.* In Syriac, Cephas, which means a stone. John i. 42. See note ch. iv. 18. ¶ *Andrew his brother.* See Note ch. iv. 18, and note at the end of the same chapter. ¶ *James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother.* These two were surnamed, for their natural vehemence of disposition, *Boanerges—sons of thunder.* Mk. iii. 17. They became the more powerful preachers after this temper was controlled and softened by the Spirit of God. James is mentioned the first, probably from his age; John being the youngest of the disciples. James was put to death early by Herod. Acts xii. 2. The other James (ver. 3), elsewhere called *the less* was the son of Alpheus or Cleophas and Mary his wife.

* The reader is referred for information to the tract "Episcopacy tested by Scripture," "Percival on the Apostolical Succession," and other like works.

He was a relative of the Virgin—not her son. He is called the *Lord's brother* (Gal. i. 19), meaning His kinsman. He was Bishop of Jerusalem, a situation of honor and danger, given him, it may be, because of this relationship. He also wrote the Catholic epistle which bears his name. On the death of Festus, the Roman governor, James the less was arraigned before the Sanhedrim, and accused of violating the law, and condemned to be stoned. At the Passover he was commanded to preach to the crowd from the battlements of the Temple, *against* the faith of Jesus the crucified. He preached the faith of Jesus sitting in the glory of heaven and to come again in the clouds. For this he was hurled down from the battlements. Not being killed by the fall, he rose on his knees and prayed for his murderers. The Jews began to stone him as he prayed, till one of the priests cried out against stoning so *just* a man. Whereupon a bystander, seizing a fuller's club, smote him on the head so that he died (A. D. 62). ¶ *Philip.* He was born at Bethsaida in Galilee, and was called next after Andrew and Peter. The Greeks applied to him to see the Saviour. John xii. 20, 21; see also xiv. 8. Tradition assigns Upper Asia as the scene of his labors, in the neighborhood of Galatia. His last preaching was in Heliopolis in Asia Minor (now Aleppo). Eusebius states that he was there first crucified, and then killed by stones hurled against him as he hung on the cross. ¶ *Bartholomew.* Bar-Tolmai, the son of Tolmai. He is thought to be the same as Nathanael. See John xxi. 2. He is believed to have preached in Armenia and India, and died either by crucifixion after the manner of St. Peter, or else was flayed alive by the barbarous people of the Indies. ¶ *Matthew the publican.* See Introduction. ¶ *Lebbeus whose surname was Thaddeus.* Mark and Luke call him *Judas*, probably another way

Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James *the son* of Alpheus, and Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus;

4 Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

5 These twelve Jesus sent forth,

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of writing Theudas for Thaddaeus. He was the brother of James the less. Matt. xiii. 55; John xiv. 22; Acts i. 13. He wrote the epistle of Jude. He was cousin of our Lord. He preached the Gospel in Mesopotamia, Arabia, and Idumaea, and suffered martyrdom at Berytus, the present Beiroot.

4. *Simon the Canaanite.* He is also called Zelotes, the Zealot. Lu. vi. 15; Acts i. 13. He may before this have belonged to a sect so called, as Canaanite and Zelotes both mean the same; or he may have received one name, Cana-ite, from being born in Cana of Galilee—the other Zelotes, from his eager temper. He was cousin of the Lord Jesus. He preached in Mesopotamia with his brother, and perhaps in *Britain.* He was martyred in Persia. ¶ *Judas Iscariot.* Iscariot means Ish-Kerioth, a man of Kerioth, a small town in the province of Judah. Josh. xv. 25. This was given to mark him from the other Theudas or Judas. He was in a measure sincere in following Christ, but never gave up the love of this world. He was avaricious, and under the garb of hypocrisy and profession of charity, carried the heart that was capable of the fell deed of treachery, which has stamped him above all competition as the Traitor. John xii. 6; vi. 70.

5. *Into the way of the Gentiles.* Into the way or region where they were to be found. This mission was confined strictly to the Jews. It was the will of God that the Jews should be allowed to reject His salvation before it was offered to others. Acts xiii. 46. He had covenanted to be *their* God. He will not deprive them of their privileges until they have had time to refuse Him. After Pentecost the Gospel was preached to all men. ¶ *Samaritans.* In the history of this unhappy people, we behold the usual degeneration of human policy and schism in religious things. They began in *policy,* in the time of Jeroboam—they ended in disgrace, idolatry, captivity, and final corruption of their blood, principles, and customs. 2 Kings xvii. 5–15. They occupied the country between Judea and Galilee. Their capital city, Samaria, was situated on Mount Gerizim, whereon they had been allowed by the king of Persia to build a temple. It is now called Nablous. When Nebuchadnezzar carried the ten tribes into captivity, he sent back into their country several races of people, from Cuth Ava, Hameth, and Sepharvaim, to take possession of it, in order to destroy the unity of the nation, as Jeroboam had before destroyed the unity of religion. 2 Kings xvii. The country was infested by lions and wild beasts. These pagans supposed that this calamity happened to them because they did not worship the God of the country. They obtained, therefore, a Jewish priest to teach them the service of the Law, and in due time erected a temple on Mount Gerizim. They became most hateful to the Jews, with whom they had several causes of quarrelling and hate. 1. The Samaritans endeavored to prevent the Jews from building their temple and city, because their offer of assistance had been refused. Neh. vi. 1-14. 2. They contended that Gerizim was the original and true place of worship. No quarrels are sharper than those arising in families or churches. 3. They held only the five books of Moses as sacred, rejecting the rest of Scripture. 4. They retained in their worship many of the notions and forms of their original paganism. It was natural, therefore, that the feud between them and the Jews should be bitter and irreconcilable. John viii. 48. If the Apostles had gone to them now, it would have excited the hatred of the Jews. Our Lord once taught them (John iv. 6–26) and the Apostles preached to them the Gospel.

and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles,[a] and into *any* city of the Samaritans enter ye not.

6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

7 And as ye go, preach, saying, [b]The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: [c]freely ye have received, freely give.

9 [‖]Provide[d] neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses;

10 Nor scrip for *your* journey, neither two coats, neither shoes,[e] nor yet staves;[f] for the workman is worthy of his meat.

11 And into whatsoever city or

a 2 Kings 17. 44. *b* Ch. 3. 2; 4. 17.
c Acts 8. 18–20. ‖ or, *get.* *d* Lu. 22. 35.
e Deut. 29. 5. *f* Lu. 10. 7.

Acts viii. 25. "The whole number of Samaritans may be estimated at one hundred and fifty. The ancient feud between them and the Jews continues unabated, and the Samaritans have no intercourse, and will not even eat and drink with the Jews. They observe the Sabbath with great strictness according to the most rigid construction of the Mosaic law, and look forward with unshaken faith to the appearing of the Messiah, who will present Himself they say, upon Mount Gerizim. They still observe the Day of Atonement, and the three great festivals, the Feasts of Tabernacles, of Pentecost and the Passover. On the last day of the Passover they make a feast, sacrifice seven lambs and eat the flesh."—*Bp. Wainwright.* Strange that Gerizim should witness in this late day to the Mosaic rites, when the altar fires of Mount Moriah have slumbered since the siege of Titus.

6. *Lost sheep.* See ch. ix. 36. The poor ignorant Jews who were neglected by their shepherds or pastors, and were straying in every direction, into sin and error, and were in great peril of destruction. Ch. xv. 24; Acts iii. 26. The increasing hatred of the Pharisees made it dangerous for our Lord to go much in certain places, as, for instance, Judea. He sends the disciples in His place, as they were less known and in less danger. His charge to them shows that they had before them a delicate and dangerous mission.

7. *Kingdom of heaven.* The dispensation of Messiah, which is a spiritual kingdom with heavenly promises. 1 Pet. ii. 5, 6. It is called *of heaven*, in contrast to the Jewish dispensation, which was of the earth. Heb. ix. 23. See note ch. iii. 2.

8. *Freely give.* Give in the same measure as ye have received the gift. He forbids them to make a bargain of their powers in any case; thus degrading the glory of His kingdom, which is beyond all price. 2 Kings v. 16. They went two together, to the various villages and cities of their people. They could receive support from those whom they benefited (Lu. x. 7), but must carefully avoid the temptation to be mercenary. Ministers have a right still to a full and honorable support from the people to whom they minister (1 Cor. ix. 8–14; 1 Tim. v. 18), but oh! let them beware that their reputation be pure from all appearance of self-interest. 1 Sam. xii. 3.

9. See Mk. vi. 8–11 and Luke ix. 3–5. These instructions, in their general sense, apply still. But they are afterwards modified by Christ. In this brief journey, the disciples are forbidden to trust to human help: He would have them lean only on Divine care. But He does not debar His ministry now from the usual means and comforts of life, as other men. Lu. xxii. 35–38. ¶ *Nor brass.* Brass was used as money in the smaller coins, as we now use copper. They were not to provide money for this journey. The Jews had several coins of gold, silver, and brass. ¶ *In your purses.* In your girdles. The loose outer robe worn by Jews was gathered at the waist by a sash or gir-

town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is[a] worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

a 1 Kings 1. 52.

12 And when ye come into an house, salute it.

13 And if the house be worthy,

dle. This was drawn close in labor or travelling to keep the garment away from the feet. See note, ch. v. 40. The hollow part of the robe over the bosom was used as a pocket, to carry valuables or money.

10. *Nor scrip.* A travelling bag or sack large enough to carry food. It was usually made of leather or coarse cloth, and hung over the shoulder. ¶ *Neither shoes.* Sandals. See note, ch. iii. 11. The idea is, that they were not to provide extra shoes nor comforts, but to travel quickly. They were to go as a *light guard*, or *swift messenger*, to arrest attention by their unusual conduct, in passing through the country, so unprepared for a journey, and impress on men the truth of that coming kingdom, as much by their manner as their words. This was revoked afterwards (Lu. xxii. 36), where we read that they "lacked nothing" in this journey. ¶ *Nor yet staves.* They might take one staff, if they had it; Mk. vi. 8. This was to aid them in walking, and protect them from common dangers. ¶ *Worthy of his meat.* This maxim applies always to the ministry. They being workmen for God to build up the people in spiritual things, are fairly deserving of a temporal support. It is bad policy in any people to be parsimonious in the support of religion; for the sins and vices which an efficient and faithful ministry prevent, are far more costly to a people than all that is needed for their support. A nation which builds no churches, will be compelled to spend greater sums in remedying the evils which religion would have prevented. God declares it the duty of Christians to give liberally to the help of those whom He has sent to minister in the Church, (Lu. x. 7; 1 Cor. ix. 7; Gal. vi. 6:) as also to treat them with due reverence. John xiii. 20; 1 Thess. iv. 8; v. 12.

11. *And into, &c.* Travellers in the east, where there are no inns, are accustomed still, to enter a town and remain in some public place, until the sheik or some elderly person, may provide them a suitable lodging during their stay. Gen. xix. 1–4. They were to inquire in such cases, for some worthy host, that is some good and pious Jew, a "son of peace," and hospitable. Lu. vii. 4. They were not to change their lodgings from pride or luxury, nor to "go from house to house." They were to maintain the dignity of His servants, being for the time prophets of God. Levity and fickleness are great faults in all who name the name of Christ.

12. *Salute it.* House, in the ancient languages, meant both a dwelling and the family residing in it. The common salutation of the Turks is now, to inquire after another's house, i. e. family. Here it is the dwelling as containing the family. They were to say, "Peace to this house." Luke x. 5. See 1 Sam. xxv. 6. It was a Jewish custom, meaning a kindly wish for the prosperity of the family, which is always most surely promoted by peace. Christians are to be men of peace, to show a gentle and courteous behavior among others. 1 Peter iii. 8–11. The same gentle salutation is still to be made by the priests of the church, when sent for to houses of sickness. He then acts more especially for the Master of all, who is absent; and desires peace within, that their affliction may be lessened, or patiently endured.

13. *Return to you.* If the family are kindly disposed and willing to hear you, your presence and wishes shall bestow on them blessings. But if they are rude and inhospitable, refusing your message, your peace shall come back into your own bosom. This same form of expression is used Ps. xxxv. 13. As a gift when refused returns to one, so this pious prayer of theirs should bring them the blessing despised by the others.

let your peace come upon it[a]: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

14 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house, or city,[b] shake off the dust of your feet.

15 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the

a Ps. 35. 13.

b Acts 31. 51; 18. 6.

They were not to put on the appearance of wishing peace to the unfriendly. They who reject the gospel, still lie under this interdict. 2 John 10, 11.

14. *Shake off the dust.* The Jews were accustomed to express their feelings and wishes by gestures and motions. Neh. v. 13; Acts xviii. 6. The dust of heathen countries they supposed to be unclean and polluted. This act is significant, as if they rejected all intercourse with them, and held them as unworthy. The Apostles Paul and Barnabas were forced to this extreme action at Antioch. Acts xiii. 51. Jesus gives His disciples for the time, the general mission and appearance of the ancient prophets. Their haste, their passage from place to place, all their actions were to be symbolical. Men would thus be led to inquire into the meaning of these acts and to seek Jesus.

15. *For Sodom and Gomorrah.* They were two heathen cities, whose inhabitants were very ignorant. But those who, having the opportunity, reject the light of Gospel truth, are guilty of *wilful* sin, and shall receive greater condemnation, ch. xi. 21–24. Lu. xii. 47. 48. It will be more easy to endure the regrets and remorse of a heathen man, who "knew, not his Lord's will," except imperfectly, than of one who goes down to eternal misery to endure the "many stripes" of a conscience enlightened by a life of church going. *Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim* were four cities, situated in the beautiful and fertile plain of the Jordan, whose charms attracted Lot to settle there. They were destroyed by divine wrath for their wickedness. Fire and brimstone from heaven, volcanic eruptions and earthquake from below, bituminous streams of liquid fire from the bowels of the earth, the plain sinking down some hundreds of feet—these manifested as divine symbols, what is the terrible fate of the finally reprobate. 2 Pet. ii. 6; Jude 7. The sluggish and pestilent brine of the Dead Sea to the south east of Palestine now pours forth it miasmata over the graves of these doomed cities. But more intolerable than this natural death and destruction will be that of cities and men who finally reject the Gospel. See Gen. xix. 24, &c. Ezek. xvi. 48, 49. Lu. xvii. 28, 29. ¶ *Day of Judgment.* This phrase is used for the first time in this Gospel. See the description of it; ch. xxv. 31–46. The Jews believed in the coming of this day, which they called "the day of the Lord" or the "great day." Is. xiii. 6; xxxiv. 8; Zeph. i. 18; Joel ii. 11.

16. *As sheep,* &c. Even as the cruel wolf is eager to destroy sheep, that he may drink their blood, so will many men, among whom you are going be anxious to ruin you, and be restrained from it, only by your prudence and innocence. ¶ *Wise as serpents.* Prudent in avoiding danger as the serpent. The peculiar wisdom of the serpent, is its activity and ease in escaping danger. The rapid evolutions of the serpent, when excited, are almost inconceivable. By their gliding motion, avoiding difficulties, reaching their object without violence, by the imagined charm in their active, brilliant eyes, as by other traits, they were esteemed among the ancients, a fit symbol of prudence or wisdom. They served to represent that innocent subtlety which they, who would win souls, are allowed to use. Prov. 1, 4. And to prevent them from imitating the venom of the serpent, Jesus bids the disciples to guard their wisdom by the innocence of the dove. "As piety without policy is too simple to be safe, so policy without piety, is too subtile to be good—" *Burkitt.* We may suppose that Our Lord Himself, in

land of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for that city.

16 ¶ Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be[a] ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless‖ as doves.

17 But beware of men:[b] for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues.

18 And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

19 But when they deliver you

a Rom. 16. 19; Eph. 5. 15. ‖ or, *simple.*

b Phil. 3. 2.

this wisdom, had at this time scattered His little band into portions, and sent them in all directions to avoid some pressing danger of the time. Saith St. Chrysostom: "But as we ought to have the wisdom of the serpent, that we should not be hurt in any deadly part, so also we should have the simplicity of the dove, not to retaliate when we are hurt, nor to avenge ourselves on those who have designed aught against us."

17. *Beware of men.* Be always on your guard, that other men do not entrap you into any imprudence or appearance of disobedience to the laws, or disrespect to the governors of the nation, either Jewish or Roman; and so have a plea to deliver you up to trial. 2 Pet. iv. 15. If they used so great efforts to insnare Jesus, they would be more dangerous to His followers. But innocence and prudence are guards in all such trials. Divine wisdom protects all who "wash their hands in innocency," and trust to truth for safety. ¶ *Councils.* The smaller councils held in the synagogues in towns and cities. It is not likely that they went to Jerusalem, where the Sanhedrim was to be found. See note, ch. v. 22. ¶ *Scourge you in their synagogues.* It seems that the Jews scourged in some part of the synagogue, those who were convicted of heresy. Acts xxii. 19. According to some learned men, there was in every synagogue a council consisting of three judges, who had the power of ordering this punishment. By the law of Moses, the number of stripes was fixed, in the case of Jews, at forty, not to exceed it. Deut. xxv. 2, 3. The Romans had no scruple as to the number. All the Apostles were scourged. Acts v. 40. St. Paul was thus maltreated five times. 2 Cor. xi. 24, 25. Scourging by the knout is still practised among the Russians, and by bastinado among the Turks, and is carried to a terrific extreme, in many cases causing death.

18. *Before governors and kings.* This, which, considering that the disciples were poor and unlearned men, was not likely, was abundantly fulfilled. In God's providence, the efforts of their enemies to destroy them were so ruled, as to carry them before the highest courts of the nation, and into the presence of heathen rulers and kings. All stood before the Jewish council. Paul before Felix, Festus, and the Roman emperor, Nero; as also Peter before Nero, and John before Domitian. Heathen hatred gave them pulpits in the palaces of monarchs, where otherwise they would never have preached the Word. ¶ *For a testimony.* A testimony against one is that which rises up to condemn a man for past evil conduct. In this sense the Apostles would rise in judgment against these rulers and the Gentiles, to convict them of having heard and deliberately rejected the Gospel. Or perhaps the reading *a testimony to* is better, a proof and sufficient witness to them of the truth of the facts and teachings of the Lord Jesus. This latter sense includes the former.

19. *Take no thought.* See note, ch. vi. 25. Do not premeditate or endeavor to make labored and elegant defences, as the rhetoricians of the age do. Speak only the plain and simple facts, as they shall come into your minds at the moment. The Spirit would guide them, if simply earnest for truth, and aid them to win a way into the hearts of their hearers. The grand beauty of all

up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

20 For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

21 And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against *their* parents, and cause them to be put to death.

22 And ye shall be hated of

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the speeches and addresses of the Apostles, as of their written style, is that which results from obedience to this precept. They spoke of *facts* which they had seen and knew. They reasoned by facts, and in the exposition of the very mysteries of the faith, they are not more profound than intelligible. The rulers of that day were accustomed to hear inflated, cold, and polished orations, from professional orators. Acts xxiv. 1. The simple, truthful earnestness of the Apostles astonished and moved them. It was the Holy Spirit, which drew off the minds of the apostles from the usual rhetorical faults of the philosophers, into which the early heretics all fell, and made them speak a language suited to their purposes, and above all comparison with any other human productions for truth and usefulness. Christians nowadays must resort to usual, innocent means of defence in legal trials, only avoiding, with particular care, the arts of wicked men in saving themselves from injury. As inspiration is withdrawn, we are left again to nature. Only let nature seek truth and simplicity rather than vanity and sound.

21. *And the brother, &c.* The hatred of the heathen and their persecutions of the Gospel have made the early accounts of the Church one of the darkest pages of human history. It was soon discovered, first by the Pharisees and afterwards by the pagan philosophers and rulers, that Christianity was an entirely new element in human society, and must either be crushed, or it would triumph over every thing else. Hence the violence, the hostility to it in the minds of the people, the severe laws and severe persecutions of it by the governors and emperors. The strife between truth and error invaded the sacred retreats of home, and every thing which is here foretold was often fulfilled. Three centuries rolled wearily away before the enemies of Christianity were compelled to cease from their hostile efforts. But before that happy time, "the noble army of martyrs" had been swelled by a glorious host of men, women, and children in the world of spirits. Let the reader consult such works as give the history of the early Church. It will both interest and profit him. He will read of holy men and women, whose courage and love for Christ will shame the piety of this luxurious age—saints at whose hallowed feet our wisest and best would be content to sit.

22. *Hated of all men.* Of all classes of unregenerate men, Jews, Gentiles, wise and ignorant, rulers and ruled. We cannot conceive it possible that men in their senses would have gone on such a mission after such a warning, unless they had the most certain conviction that they were in the right way. ¶ *Endureth unto the end.* To the end of these trials, or of life. In Revelation it is called *overcoming* (ch. ii. 7, 17, 26), for a Christian can be sure of victory only when he has overcome all his foes. We may always be sure that Christ "for His part will most surely keep and perform" the promises made by Him. But we do not, we cannot know that we shall overcome and be faithful unto death (Rev. ii. 10) until our last temptation and trouble has been subdued. Piety does not require us to feel perfectly sure of salvation. We hope, we believe, but as long as we are in the flesh we do not *know*. Our duty is to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. Phil. ii. 12. There is no calling and election so sure but we must seek to *ensure* it. 2 Pet. i. 10.

all *men* for my name's sake : but he that endureth to the ‖end shall be saved.

23 But when they persecute you in this city,[b] flee ye into another : for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come.

24 The disciple is not above *his* master, nor the servant above his lord.

25 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord : if they have called the master of the house ‖Beelzebub, how much more *shall they call* them of his household ?

26 Fear them not therefore:

a Rev. 2. 10. 17. *b* Acts 8. 1.

‖ or, *end* or *finish*. ‖ *Beelzebul*.

"O thou most worthy Judge eternal! suffer us not, at our last hour, for any pains of death to fall from Thee."

23. *Flee ye to another.* This was a foresight for their safety, for which they had reason to be grateful. Acts viii. 1. In the next ages, it was necessary often to urge such directions in order to repress the enthusiasm for martyrdom which prevailed. Men may use all proper means to avoid persecution, but they must not deny their faith nor do discredit to the truth. In this and other verses of this chapter, we discover that our Saviour goes on in thought to speak of the *apostolic mission* after He shall have departed from earth. It is not unusual for Him to mingle in one address a prescience of two similar events, one of which is typical and experimental of the other. ¶ *Till the Son of man be come.* See notes on ch. xxiv. 27, &c. This coming signifies that fearful event which happened thirty years after this—the destruction of Jerusalem. That holy and chosen city had all along been a type and symbol of the Church of Christ, and her downfall by the Roman armies was true to her history from the beginning. It was spoken of by the Lord Jesus in the same terms which mark the destruction of the world. The coming of the Son of man is in verity and fulness at the end of the world—in power and type at the fall of Jerusalem. The disciples had not ceased from their attempts to reconcile the Jews to Christianity, till that event drove them far and wide among the Gentiles.

24, 25. *The disciple, &c.* This was a proverbial saying among the Hebrews. They abused the Master; they would much more seek to intimidate His followers. Alas! that men will fear names of opprobrium in the mouths of prejudiced persons. We are to fear God and hold the truth, no matter what harsh names are hurled against us. Think a moment of the evil names now in use to impede the truth, and gird your mind by this counsel of your Lord, to believe, profess and do right, though others may rail. ¶ *Beelzebub.* See note ch. xii. 24.

26, 27. *Nothing covered, &c.* These words are capable of two meanings. 1. Fear not for the Gospel which you are to preach. Lu. xii. 2, 3. It would appear to be neglected, opposed or hated. It would seem ready to die out from the violence of its enemies. It would, however, yet prevail over the surrounding darkness, and become known and honorable in all the world. Or, 2. Fear not for yourselves. Their reputations would be assailed; their enemies would seem to triumph over them; perhaps they would die in obscurity and disgrace; but Jesus would yet clear their fame, and give them high places of honor among men and a throne in heaven. How fully have both been found true! So, doubting believer, only serve and fear the Lord God, and the same "everlasting arms" are beneath you, to shield you from all harm.

27. *House top.* The tops of the houses in the east are flat. See note ch. ix. 2. My doctrine, and life, the secret parable, the agony of Gethsemane, the

for there is nothing covered,[a] that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

27 What I tell you in darkness, *that* speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, *that* preach ye upon the house-tops.

28 And fear[b] not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in[‖] hell.

29 Are not two sparrows sold for a [‖]farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

30 But the very hairs[c] of your head are all numbered.

a Lu. 12. 2, 3; 1 Cor. 4. 5.
b Is. 8. 12, 13; 51. 7, 12.
‖ or, *Gehenna.*
‖ *It is in value half penny farthing, in the original as being the tenth part of the Roman penny.*
c Acts 27, 34.

resurrection, all which you now see and take note of, all are to be proclaimed by you to all men. They had little idea then, of the tremendous spiritual depth and meaning of what was quietly passing before them.

28. *Fear not them.* He sets before them the two kinds of fear which distinguish the Christian and the worldly man. They who kill the body are men. Even this they cannot do, unless permitted; and how transient are the pains of death. How soon it must come on us, even at the longest. On the other hand, God has power to destroy both soul and body in hell. He will certainly subject sinners against Him, those who have betrayed the truth, to all the horrors of the second death. Oh that in this age of vanity and selfishness, men would *dare* a little more to let their religion appear and honor it, and cease striving to compromise between the fear of men and the fear of God. ¶ *In hell.* See note ch. v. 22. St. Jerome in the fourth century writes thus of the word *Hell.* "This word (Gehenna) is *not found in the Old Scriptures, but it is first used by the Saviour.* Let us inquire then into its origin. We read in more than one place that the idol Baal was near Jerusalem, at the foot of Mount Moriah, by which the brook Siloë flows. This valley and a small level plain was watered and woody, a delightful spot, and a grove in it was consecrated to the idol. To so great madness had the children of Israel come that, forsaking the neighborhood of the temple, they offered their sacrifices there, and, concealing an austere ritual under a voluptuous life, they burned their sons in honor of a demon. This place is called Gehenna, that is, the valley of the children of Hinnom. These things are fully described in Kings and Chronicles, and the book of Jeremiah. 2 Kings xxiii. 10; 2 Chron. xxviii. 3; Jer. vii. 32; xxxii. 35. God threatens that He will fill the place with the carcases of the dead, that it be no more called Tophet and Baal, but Polyandrion, that is, the tomb of the dead. Hence the torments and eternal pains with which sinners will be punished are signified by this word." And St. Augustine says of it, "This cannot be, before the soul is so joined to the body, that nothing can sever them. Yet it is rightly called the death of the soul, because it does not live to God; and the death of the body, because, though man does not cease to feel, yet because that his feeling has neither pleasure nor health, but is a pain and a punishment, it is better named death than life."

29–31. We have here the declaration of a *special Providence.* God knows all His creatures and provides for their wants. If the hairs of the head are all numbered, how much more does He know all our thoughts, feelings, and wishes! If a sparrow shall not fall without His notice, how can a Christian be injured or die without His permission, and that in accordance with His wisdom and mercy? The apostles were few, would feel desolate and outcast, unless they could be as sure of God's care as these verses would make them. We may imagine one of those

31 Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.

32 Whosoever[a] therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

33 But whosoever shall deny me before me, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword.[b]

35 For [c]I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

36 And a man's foes *shall be* they of his own household.[d]

37 He that loveth[e] father or

a Rev. 3. 5. *b* Lu. 12. 49. 53. *c* Mic. 7. 6.

d Ps. 41. 9. *e* Lu. 14. 26.

first Christians, afar from all Christian sympathy, borne down by a mob of cruel men, who hated and abused him. How consoling the very littleness to which these words condescend! 'God cares for the sparrows, has numbered the hairs of the head: surely I am not forgotten by His Omniscient Love." Rom. viii. 28 and 31. ¶ *Sparrows.* Small birds of little value, of black throat and brown head. See Ps. cii. 7. ¶ *Farthing.* See note ch. v. 26. ¶ *Without your Father.* Without His consent.

32, 33. *Confess me before men.* This was addressed to men who might afterwards be seized by a raging mob, and destroyed. They would be called to make their confession suddenly, under circumstances of great terror, and must do it clearly and firmly. Thus 1 Tim. vi. 12, 13, the same word is used of some trial to which Timothy had been exposed, and "had professed a good profession before many witnesses," and again to the Passion of Jesus before Pontius Pilate. It was a source of rich consolation to the martyrs, that Jesus would yet confess them, and own them to be His friends in the Judgment. The words apply also to the ordinary profession of a Christian. 2 John 7; Ro. x. 10. All who sincerely profess Christ He will own. A profession of the Christian religion requires a union with the holy Church by the sacraments and creeds, a life of sanctification, a conversation purified from worldliness, and a courage and willingness to acknowledge the spirit of obedience to the Gospel under any and every trial—even to death, if God so wills it. We can confess Him by an humble and good life; and it is often harder to *live* well, than to die bravely. On the other hand we may deny Christ, in doctrine, that is, deny Him as our God and Saviour, by corrupting the creed, or in words, by wicked expressions, and shameful silence before the world, or vitally, by an unholy life. For each or all of which He will deny us, however much we may at last make our claims to His notice.

34–36. *Think not, &c.* The words resemble those found in Micah vii. 6. Jesus foretells that such troubles would be the effect of man's passions, contending against His word. Some Christians would seem to intrepret it as if He intended them to disturb the peace of the church. But not so. He came to bring peace. It was necessary, however, to warn the disciples, lest, blindly following the letter of prophecy concerning Him, they would expect to lead lives of temporal ease and prosperity. This they would not have. It would require time and great trouble before Christians could be safe from their enemies. He gave them inward and spiritual peace which "passeth understanding," the joy of sins forgiven, the hope of holiness, the satisfactions of a true, faithful obedience—but it was given "not as the world giveth it." The real cause of the troubles which followed was not religion, but the irreligion of man. The light shone into the darkness, and

mother more than me, is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.

38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

39 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it.

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the darkness comprehended it not, but sought to overwhelm and destroy it. ¶ *Send a sword.* This means, to be the occasion of great bloodshed and cruelty. Many crimes have been done against religion—but alas! how many in its name. In some lands it has been as a sword in the hands of a madman.

37. *He that loveth, &c.* The closest natural social ties, when they come in competition with our duties to God, must be disregarded; but only then. Any one of the disciples who, seeing this trouble and this general hostility of his relations, will rather seek for peace, by yielding to any who oppose, even if they should be parents, and giving up the profession of his faith in Christ, is not worthy to be called His disciple, and to obtain a disciple's reward in heaven. When a man who has been educated in a humanly devised sect, is convinced of error, and satisfied that the Church of Christ is still to be found, and forbids his separation from her, it is sophistry for him to plead that his fathers have led him wrong, and that he is unwilling to discredit their opinions. Religious convictions should be paramount.

38. *Taketh not his cross.* When a criminal was condemned to crucifixion, a part of his sentence was that he should carry his cross to the place of execution. The cross was made of two solid beams, fixed across each other. To this the criminal was fastened by thongs or nails through the hands and feet, and left to die by exhaustion and indescribable nervous sufferings. To take up the cross means here, to *submit to the fate* of trouble and persecution which was to come upon them. It means generally a willingness to suffer for Christ, all things which He requires of us. He desires His disciples to have courage and faith to trust Him in all trials which He may put on them. It does not mean that we are to *make* crosses, and volunteer an useless contest with others, by a proud and Pharisaic manner. "It enjoins," says Bp. Porteus, "nothing more than a constant habit of vigilance and self-government, a cautious and jealous attention to the movements of our minds, and the progress of our passions, a discreet and sober, not a criminal and unbounded conformity to the world, a strict abstinence from all irregular and immoral gratifications, without declining any of the duties, or sullenly withdrawing from any of the enjoyments, conveniences and comforts of social life."

39. *He that findeth, &c.* These words suppose one in the times of persecution, as it were, before a cruel pagan governor or mob, not knowing how his fate will be decided. If he apostatize and deny Jesus, and so find his life, he shall lose his soul, his hope, and the Spirit of God, which is his true life. But he who bravely adheres to Christ and dies for his faith, he shall find by a short transit, a life such as "eye hath not seen, or mind conceived." The Greek word ψυχη allows this change upon it. It signifies indifferently, *spirit*, *soul* and *life*.

40–42. *He that receiveth, &c.* In the troubled times which are to follow, he that receives you and protects you, because you are my disciples and apostles, shall receive, if he will have faith, Me also. It would be too much to suppose these verses general, for many would gain reward with little trouble. But read an explanation of them in the courage of Rahab. She received the spies as the Lord's servants, lodged them, served them in danger at her own risk, and sent them away, and was saved and all her house. Josh. ii. 8–22; Heb. xi. 31. So did Obadiah in the wicked reign of Jezebel. 1 Kings xviii. 3, 4. And it we recall to mind the persecutions of the early Church, we can see a satisfactory explanation of these promises. He who risks his life, in receiving and defending

40 ¶ He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me,[a] receiveth him that sent me.

41 He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward.

42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones, a cup of cold[b] *water* only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

a John 12. 44.

b 1 Kings 17. 10; Heb. 6. 10.

a "righteous man" because he is a Christian, cannot be far from the kingdom of heaven. ¶ *These little ones.* The disciples. They were poor men, of no repute or power, and as yet only babes in spiritual knowledge, utterly unconscious of the troubles coming upon them, and unable to defend themselves against the arts and violence of a wicked world. Ch. xi. 25; 1 Cor. iii. 1, &c.

ADDITIONAL NOTE.

The tenth chapter relates the preparatory mission and charge to the chief pastors of the Church. It is believed by all Christians, that the office then instituted for a special end and object, was afterwards renewed and continued to meet the wants of the Church of Christ, after its Head had departed into the heavens. It must strike every reader that this charge to them dwells very little upon the *formal* matters of their mission. It is taken up with the great principles of the duty which they were to perform, and the disposition of mind, in which they were to set about it. This fact is in keeping with the one which is evident in all the gospels, that the great radical principles of religion were promulgated in the *Life of Jesus*, but the matters of the exact form in which those principles were to increase and spread abroad, were left unrevealed until after His resurrection. Therefore St. Luke (Acts i. 3) informs us that our Lord was *forty days* with the disciples after His rising from the grave, "speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." Hence it is evident that the Church has put this whole question of the ministry upon the right ground, when she sends her members to "holy Scripture *and* ancient authors," to learn all that is to be known of that revelation which the Lord Jesus made to the disciples concerning the "things pertaining" to the Church. Among them was, beyond doubt, the declaration of the general form in which they were to regulate her growth in the world. And inasmuch as it is evident that the writers among the apostles did not any of them set down to make a definitive declaration of all the rules and axioms of Church government, but did only mention them as they came up to their minds *casually* (if we may dare characterize any act of an *inspired* mind by such a term), we see the plain necessity, therefore, of joining the *history* of the New Testament (which is given by ancient authors) to the New Testament, in order to understand it. (See General Introduction.) There is no book in the New Testament, answering in any respect to the books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy in the Old. And why? Evidently because the two covenants began from two contrary starting points. The Old from an *objective Law*, well defined from the beginning, cut in as it were in tables of stone. The New began from the Life of Jesus, flowed out into actions of His Life, which were partly recorded, but chiefly were *felt and remembered* in the living tablets of the souls of the disciples. It was years after His death before any gospel was written at all. It seems to have been a century at least, before any considerable collection of the New Testament writings was made by single

CHAPTER XI.

AND it came to pass when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.

churches. And it was certainly not till a much longer period, that the New Testament or Canon, as we now call it, was universally known and recognized as the authorized word. Who then gave us this Canon? Surely the Allwise, through His ministers the apostles, and their successors. Those, therefore, who pretend to receive this Scripture from them, and yet use it for the purpose of destroying *their* authority, who collected it and sealed it as authentic, are guilty of a great error. They take the written word from its history. They receive this Canon from a church (that of the second and third centuries) which, beyond question, acknowledged no other form of Church regimen, than that of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, and instead of explaining the hints and chance expressions of Scripture by the *known facts*, which the witnesses and keepers of Scripture declare to have been the only explanation of them, they invent a false standard of judging—they disturb the Book, by denying it that, which such a book must eminently claim as its authorized interpreter--*a living history*. And we, in fact, find that all those who are guilty of this error in the matter of the apostolic ministry, do yet reject it and condemn it, when they attempt to argue for the authenticity of the text. They claim to be spiritual, yet exalt the letter of the printed volume, above the known records of the living Church of the early ages. In the latter case, they reject the authority of the Fathers. In the former they say unhesitatingly, that that authority is decisive. Therefore we who are members of a Church, which loves to join hands with Ignatius and Irenæus, Clement and Jerome, and hear from them a united testimony to those things which we value as the proper and authorized will of God, are bound to be grateful and reverent to that Church, which sends us for the settlement of all matters of discipline to the "holy Scripture and ancient authors." The only true and satisfactory evidence for us of this late age, in all matters not exactly stated in Scripture, must be the united testimony of those who immediately succeeded the apostles. And the united testimony of the whole Church, without hesitation, has been given in favor of these three orders—Bishops, Priests and Deacons.

Our Lord did not see fit to organize a Church in the midst of the Jews during His life. That act would have excited their bitterest opposition, and hastened His destruction. In this tenth chapter then, He lays down only the rudiments of the ministerial office, its duties and work. Just after His resurrection, while in secret with them, He committed to them their powers. John xx. 21–23. And during the forty days which He spent with them He instructed them. They did the same to others. The secret, unrecorded history of the Church, went alongside of the written word, and after the living, infallible teachers had departed, one after another, and the authority of the testimony of the Church became necessary, the living history became visible in the arguments drawn from what we now call primitive tradition. Our Lord Jesus did then authorize that form of the Church, which we now have. He copied it from the things which Moses had seen in the mount: that heavenly vision, that lay at the foundation of all the observances of the Jewish law. That law recognized three great orders, the High Priest, the long succession of Priests, and the Levites. The Christian Church in each city recognized the same. The Apostle or Bishop answering to the High Priest: the priest called indifferently for a short time Bishop or Presbyter, and the deacon. The Fathers bear testimony to these orders and their various and differing duties. We pretend not in our short space to give the arguments of history,

2 Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples,

3 And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?

4 Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again

and refer the reader to the little tracts and the learned works which have abundantly set it forth in order.

CHAPTER XI.

1. *And it came to pass.* The directions contained in the last chapter had been given near Capernaum. Jesus also goes on a mission to the Jews in the cities and towns of Galilee.

2. *Now when John, &c.* See also St. Luke vii. 18–35. There are two explanations of this conduct of St. John. He wished to obtain fuller satisfaction for himself, or else to convince his disciples. 1. John assuredly knew that Jesus, whom he had borne witness to as the Lamb of God, was the Messiah. John i. 29–36; iii. 29–36. But this good man, seeing that he was suffered to linger in prison, while others were chosen to be companions, may have been impatient at this apparent neglect. If the disciples expected Christ to become a temporal prince even till the last interview with Him, of course John, in common with others, would be looking for the signs of it. But as he does not see any efforts for temporal greatness, nay, rather that the Messiah's kinsman is allowed to remain in prison, he sends to inquire of His intentions. Jesus with affectionate delicacy instructs him that the Messiah's kingdom is not of this world, and warns him not to take offence at the nature of His work. 2. The more general opinion is that John sends his disciples to Jesus, that *they* may be confirmed in the faith by the sight of the Messiah. If so, the answer of Jesus, referring them to the prophecies of Isaiah, proves to them that the Christ was to be known by such signs; and warns them not to stumble at the humble circumstances in which they found Him. ¶ *In prison.* John had rebuked Herod, for his wicked connection with Herodias. Ch. xiv. 3, 4. He was confined, as Josephus tells us, in the castle of Machaerus. He heard of the works of Jesus from his own disciples, who seem to have felt some jealousy on his account.

3. *He that should come.* The Jews expected the Messiah to come. Gen. xlix. 10. They understood by this question, therefore, "art Thou the Christ—who is to make the nation glorious and triumphant over its enemies?" Perhaps there is a covert complaint at the delay in assuming regal state. If so, how gentle is the acted reply of Jesus. How persuasive the warning to his sad and impatient forerunner.

4, 5. *Which ye do hear.* See Luke vii. 18. It was usual in the prophetic style to use symbols and actions, and abrupt sentences, leaving the meaning to be inferred by the hearer. Jesus bids them witness His works and report them faithfully, and leaves John to make the inference, which he undoubtedly did make, that He who could do such works was, beyond all question, He "who should come." Miracles prove supernatural power, and works of mercy prove goodness in the use of that power. And the open invitation to see His works, and tell all that they see, shows that Jesus adopted none of the arts of impostors. ¶ *The poor, &c.* This, though not a miracle, was abundantly strange and unheard of. The sects of the Jews and philosophic schools of the pagans, all neglected the poor. Isaiah (xi. 1) had marked it as a noticeable sign of the Messiah, that He should declare His good-tidings to the meek, or poor in spirit, rather than to the rich.

6. *And blessed is he, &c.* To be offended, in this place, means to be scandalized, or to take offence. This stumbling-block was the humble life of Jesus. How could one, of whose coming such great things had been foretold, remain in obscurity by His own choice? The time had not come to explain this difficulty. All wondered at it, but none could re-

those things which ye do hear and see:

5 The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

6 And blessed[a] is *he* whosoever shall not be offended in me.

7 ¶ And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see?[b] A reed shaken with the wind?

8 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft *clothing* are in king's houses.

9 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.

10 For[c] this is *he* of whom it is

a Is. 8. 14, 15; 1 Pet. 2. 8.

b Eph. 4. 14.

c Is. 40, 3; Mal. 3, 1.

ceive grace to understand it, until His atonement was finished, and the Holy Spirit was come upon earth. Hence He warns them, by a promise of blessing, not to deny Him, because of this one difficulty yet unexplained. Mysteries in religion are necessary. We should receive them in humble faith, and wait God's time to reveal their meaning.

7. *Concerning John.* John was in prison, neglected doubtless by the fickle people who had at one time flocked to hear him, willing to hail him as Messiah. Now the popular current has turned and left him. Jesus, lest this message sent by John might occasion cavil, and to show the vanity of worldly popularity, utters a commendation of his faithful, afflicted servant. The questions commend John, and rebuke those who, "like reeds shaken by the wind," had so soon forgotten him; who, being soft and effeminate, had shrunk from his self-denying doctrines, and deserted him, as if their once going to the banks of Jordan had been only for amusement. ¶ *A reed shaken with the wind.* The banks of the Jordan were covered with thickets of reeds or canes, which, being long and lithe, rustled and bent with every breeze. It is an image of fickleness and love of change. Had they gone to see such a man?—They knew better. And though now John might seem to doubt, yet he was no reed to be shaken about, and changed without reason. They had been as little benefited, by their going to hear John, and receive his baptism of repentance, as if they had only gone to look at the winds playing among the reeds of the river bank.

8. *Soft raiment.* See vii. 25. The dress of rich and courtly persons, contrasted with the coarse garments of prophets and poor people. Did you go out expecting to hear a prince, or a courtly herald proclaiming the kingdom of a temporal prince, and are you now disappointed, that you have left him? You should have sought courtly heralds in palaces, not there. You found a man of sterner qualities, coarsely clad, depending on the productions of the wilderness, neither eating or drinking as common men. Being such, contrasted to all effeminate, flattering courtiers, he taught you the doctrines of a strong and energetic self-denial and virtue, and how by "violence" to your sinful lusts, and repentance, you should seek the Messiah. And how soon have you forgot his lessons, and turned back to your former sins.

9. *More than a prophet.* The answer to this question is, that they had gone there to find a prophet, i. e. a teacher of divine truth with a message from God. Yet how soon had they forgotten His message. John was more than a prophet. He not only foretold the future, but his own coming was foretold (Mal. iii. 1); he was born in a miraculous manner; he was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb (Lu. 1. 15); he seems to have been a remarkably self-denying and righteous

written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than [a]John the Baptist: notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven[‖] suffereth violence, and the violent take[b] it by force.

13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

14 And if ye will receive *it*, this is Elias which was for to come.[c]

a John 3. 30.

‖ or, *is gotten by force, and they that thrust men.* c Lu. 16. 16. d Mal. 4. 5; Ch. 17. 12.

man; he closed the line of prophets, bore direct, open testimony to Christ, baptized Him, and saw the vision of the Spirit, at that time, and was thus the link which joins the Old and New covenants. He saw not the cross nor the resurrection, and received not the Christian baptism by the Holy Ghost. Acts xix. 2, 3. He was saved after the manner of faithful men under the olden covenant.

10. *For this is He, &c.* These words are found in Mal. iii. 1, with one remarkable variation. There it reads, "*before Me*," and "*My way*," meaning Jehovah who is speaking. Our Lord now changes the pronoun to the second person, showing that the one speaking is the same Jehovah. The two compared afford a proof that the Son of God is the Jehovah of the Old Testament, the Lord Jesus Christ of the New. See also Is. xl. 3; Lu. i. 76; Jas. i. 23.

11. *Those born of women.* Among all men everywhere, there has not been a greater, i. e. one endowed with greater gifts by God. ¶ *Is greater.* Not the least Christian so much, as the least prophet or teacher in the Church, is greater in spiritual gifts than John. In office they are greater, for they preach the evangelical kingdom of Messiah; in doctrine, which is more spiritual and heavenly; in respect of the divine assistance, they have richer gifts of the Holy Ghost. See John x. 41; vii. 39. To be *great* in the Gospel sense is to be good and humble, and diligent in serving God.

12. *From the days of John.* Since the first preaching of John there has been a change of dispensation. Before, the power of Judaism was undisturbed. Since then a change has happened gradually. John offered his message to all alike. The Son of man has turned aside from the rich, to preach salvation to the poor. ¶ *Suffereth violence.* The Gospel is represented here as a city taken by storm. Multitudes press into it. "They that thrust men," i. e. they who press each other in a crowd, who long with desire to get to it, succeed. If we would take the kingdom of heaven, it must be by as great zeal and earnestness, by as energetic labor as men show in the storming of a city. No other violence will succeed. But such earnestness, such resolution *not to fail*, will certainly be the first thing required of us. Lu. xviii. 2–7.

13. *The law prophesied.* See Heb. x. 1. The law contained types and prophecies of the future Gospel. By the law is meant the five books of Moses; by the prophets, the remainder of the Old Testament. The coming of John was an epoch, marking the change of the covenants. Before it, men had only the law and prophets, and looked for a future Messiah. Since then, we have the teaching of the Son of God, with whom the contrite and earnest prevail by faith and prayer.

14. *If ye will receive it.* If ye will not take offence at it and cavil, but believe and ponder it. Religion requires us to believe some things which we cannot understand. Our reason is

15 [a]He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

16 ¶ But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows,

17 And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.

18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil.

19 The Son of man[b] came eating and drinking, and they say, Be-

a Rev. 2. 7.

b Ch. 9. 10; John 2. 2.

given, to show us when it is right to believe. It was right then for them to receive it; for they had seen the proofs of divine power in Him enough to convince them of His right to explain prophecy. ¶ *This is Elias.* Or Elijah, whose history is found in the first and part of the second book of Kings. He was a remarkable prophet, living in a sinful age, austere, bold, poor and solitary, and appearing from time to time on the scene, armed with great powers by Jehovah. He at last vanished from earth in a vision of a chariot of fire and whirlwind. 2 Kings ii. 11. The Jews expected the real Elijah the Tishbite to come again, perhaps as he was seen to go, to anoint the Christ and "restore all things." They understood all in a carnal sense. They could not receive the spiritual analogy and likeness of John to Elijah, that he came in "the spirit and power of Elias." Lu. i. 17; ch. xvii. 10. In a word they interpreted the splendid visions of prophecy as wrongfully as we should, if we expected, from the Revelation of St. John, a veritable earthly city with streets of gold and gates of pearl. It was this carnal interpretation which concealed from them the spiritual truths of the Gospel. 2 Cor. iii. 15.

15. This form of speech is common in the New Testament, to instruct all who hear that the doctrine there declared is very important. It was of the greatest importance that the hearers should attend and search for the meaning of this declaration concerning John the Baptist; for until they could allow that he was in some spiritual sense the representative of Elijah, they could not reconcile the Old Testament and the claims of Jesus.

16–19. *Whereunto shall I liken, &c.* As if he looked about to find something as unreasonable and capricious. They were not like men, but like perverse and sullen children. Two bands of children are together in some place of sport. One is angry or silent; the others try to soothe them and persuade them to join in their sports. They mimic for them a wedding procession, with singing and dancing; but it did not please them. They next "mourn unto them," imitate the mournful music and pace of a funeral, yet without effect. They then complain of it, that they do not know what to do for them, when neither laughing nor crying with them will attract their good will. So obstinate, changeful and capricious was that generation. They cavilled at every thing, and condemned all who sought their good. John came 'neither eating nor drinking;" that is, he lived a prophet's life, was ascetic, was at no feast, took no wine, no indulgence—but came exactly as the prophets had come before. You saw all the signs of a prophet in him; yet you did not obey him. You called him melancholy, wild, raving, as if he was guided by an evil spirit. I am come eating and drinking, living as others, mingling in the common duties and innocent festivities of daily life, found at feasts and weddings, neither ascetic nor melancholy. How perverse and unworthy of *men* is your childish slander against Me for this manner of life. ¶ *Markets.* Public places in the streets of a city, wherever there was room for sale of articles, or for children to play. ¶ *Piped.* Pipes are wind instruments, made of hollow reeds and canes. They were used at feasts. ¶ *Neither eating nor drinking.* John

hold, a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.

20 ¶ Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not.

21 Wo unto thee, Chorazin! wo unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

22 But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.

23 And thou, Capernaum, which [a]art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to [b]hell:

a Is. 14. 13–15; Lam. 2. 1. or, *Hades the grave.*

was a Nazarite. Lu. i. 15. He was hardly seen to eat, as he lived alone, and came out of retirement only on his mission to preach or baptize. It means only that he abstained from all the common gratifications of life—was what we name a hermit or ascetic. ¶ *Gluttonous.* One given to an excessive love of good living. They would have it that Jesus went to eat with sinners because he loved their feasts, not their souls. ¶ *Wine-bibber.* One given to wine. ¶ *Wisdom is justified, &c.* The children of wisdom—that is, wise men, as were the disciples of John and of Jesus—justify and approve of wisdom, or the counsel of God, as shown in the mission of each of them, though the Pharisees refused. When evil men have exhausted all their enmity and slander against the ways of God, there will be found many wise men to confess their excellence and obey their requirements. Ps. xcii. 5, 6; Prov. xvii. 24.

20. *Upbraid.* To blame them publicly for this want of repentance at the sight of His works.

21. *Chorazin, Bethsaida.* These were small towns on the northern shore of the sea of Galilee, near Capernaum. Jesus had been present in them at different times, and the villagers had been able to judge of the miracles, done by Christ in their neighborhood. Bethsaida was the town of Philip, Andrew and Peter. John i. 44. The name means a "place of hunting or fishing." The woe denounced against it, was soon fulfilled. It is now, if its situation is at all known, a poor village consisting of five or six miserable cottages. Chorazin is thought to have been more on the west side of the sea. The site is unknown. ¶ *Tyre and Sidon.* Cities of the Philistines or Phoenicians, lying on the Mediterranean shore. They were heathen cities, famous for great wealth, commerce and luxury—and also great vices. Tyre, about 100 miles northwest of Jerusalem, built 1300 B.C., is often mentioned in the Old Testament. 2 Chron. ii. 11–16. It was denounced by the prophets for its pride and wickedness. It was built partly on the mainland and partly on a small island, about seventy paces distant; of great natural strength, and fortified by high walls. Its merchants were the most famous of the old world. They brought to the city the commerce of the Mediterranean, and at an early period had established flourishing colonies. It resisted a siege of Shalmaneser for five years; was reduced by Nebuchadnezzar after a thirteen years war. Afterwards it was rebuilt and again taken by Alexander the Great, in a siege of five months. It is now a squalid village of no importance. A few fishermen live on the site, where once walked the proudest and most successful merchants of the world. Her merchants were princes, her traffickers, the honorable of the earth, and she, the joyous, the crowning city. Is. xxiii. 7–3. Now she is "like the top of a rock—a place to spread nets on—to be built no more—the Lord has spoken it." Ezek. xxvi. 14. See Ezek. xxvii. xxviii. ¶ *Sidon,*

for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

24 But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, in the day of judgment than for thee.

25 ¶ At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.[a]

26 Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.

27 All things[b] are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father;[c] neither knoweth any

a Ps. 8. 2; 1 Cor. 1. 27. *b* Ch. 28. 18; 1 Cor. 15. 27. *c* John 1. 18; 1 John 5. 20.

twenty miles north of Tyre, was in the bounds of the tribe of Asher. Josh. xix. 28. The tribes however never gained possession of it. Judges i. 31. It was also a commercial city, and famous for its valuable timber and skilful workmen. It is now much less populous. Its present name is Seide or Saide. ¶ *Sackcloth and ashes.* These were marks of contrition and humiliation. Is. lviii. 5. Such cloth was the coarsest fabric for garments then known, and used only by the poorest people. When any person or city desired to express sorrow for sin, and to deprecate the anger of God, they repented in sackcloth and ashes, as Nineveh. Jonah iii. 5. They put off their rich and soft garments, threw ashes on their heads and sat in the dust. Better is the mourning of the soul: but what shall we say of those who never in any way mourn for sin? Will not the people of Nineveh rise up against them in judgment?

23. *Capernaum.* See note ch. iv. 13. ¶ *Exalted unto heaven, &c.* These are figurative expressions, adopted from the style of the Hebrew Testament. Ezek. xxviii. 2–8. As this village had received the greatest privileges from God, being the abode of Christ and the scene of His wonderful works, and had not repented, so it would be subjected to the severest punishment hereafter. In the wars of the Romans and Jews, Capernaum was utterly destroyed. ¶ *Down to hell.* The word hell here is Hades, a vast abyss in the lower parts of the earth, opposed to heaven or the firmament over our heads. It means that the city should be brought down to the grave, *i. e.* be utterly destroyed. See note ch. v. 22; x. 28. The threat of future punishment against the wicked people of these places follows as an *inference* from this language. God does not punish stone walls or houses. Their destruction is a mark of His wrath against the sinful men who dwelt in them. ¶ *Sodom.* See note, ch. x. 15. Capernaum, the most highly exalted, is contrasted with the place of all others most terribly punished.

25. *The wise and prudent.* He does not thank God so much for concealing the Gospel from the worldly-minded, as for revealing it to simple believers, when the others have rejected it. These words describe the "wisdom of the world which is foolishness with God." The false philosophies of that age, and the "conclusions of science," were opposed to the Gospel. Wise men, *i. e.* they who were skilled in abstract questions, such as, what is entity, what is matter, whence came it, what is the cause of evil, &c. &c., could not endure the preaching of Christ's followers, because they asserted facts of *faith*, and would not engage in metaphysical subtleties. The wise men of Athens called St. Paul a *babbler*, because He *preached* "Jesus and the resurrection;" and did not tell them, how evil came, whether by a property of matter, &c. &c. ¶ *Babes.* The disciples of Christ; simple, unlearned, *believing* men. 1 Cor. 1. 27. The mysteries of the Gospel require faith. We cannot fathom them: we can know them only by faith in the word of God. Reason asks, Is the Bi-

man the Father, save the Son, and *he* to whomsoever the Son will reveal *him*.

28 ¶ Come unto me, all *ye* that labour,[a] and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 For my yoke *is* easy,[b] and my burden is light.

a 2 Tim. 2. 25; Jas. 3. 13.

b 1 John 5. 3.

ble the word of God? and if satisfied of this fact, it bids us receive all it contains in faith, as a babe or child receives the assertions of its parents. Ch. xviii. 3. Men educated in science, without an humble religious spirit, are too apt to despise the believer. Children must be grounded from infancy in a belief of the truths taught in the Catechism. Only an early education in a right and simple faith can build up the true heroic character of Christian piety.

27. *All things.* The whole natural creation, the earth and the worlds, and all things in them have been subjected to the Son of God. John i. 3; Heb. i. 10. The Creed bids us confess faith in the Only Son, "*by whom all things were made.*" Here, however, the things to which our Lord is supposed to refer, are, all things of His spiritual kingdom as *Mediator*—all power in heaven and earth." Ch. xxviii. 18. These were committed to Him as Christ, on account of His Incarnation (Phil. ii. 7–12), and to be communicated at His will, for the salvation of His followers. ¶ *No man, &c.* These words declare the existence of the inscrutable knowledge and being of the Godhead. The nature of the Ommiscient only an ommiscient Being can know. No man hath seen or known God—except the Son. By knowledge or science no mere man can know God. The revelation which is made to us, is of His character, as loving us, and sending His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Of this character we gain glimpses by loving Him, and obeying Him, and imitating His love, as St. John teaches at large in his epistles. 1 John ii. 3, 29. Our Saviour does not mean, that God is a respecter of persons, and reveals Himself to one man, and not to another, by any secrecy or partiality in His will. For the same Gospel had been made known to Pharisee and disciple, to wise and prudent and to babes alike, but the wise had deliberately refused it—the disciples had accepted it. Therefore God gives the latter more grace. He invites all men to come to Him, and find rest.

28. *Come unto me.* This is an invitation, to all the Jews, in the first instance, who labored under the burden of the ordinances of their dispensation—(ch. xxiii. 4), and especially to the poor and afflicted, who were groaning under weary troubles. Lu. xiii. 16. Next it extends to the heathen, who were weighed down with the burdens of sin and the accusations of conscience, without any revelation to help them to know God. It is a precious invitation now, to all sinful men, as it shows us the desire of the Lord Jesus to relieve us of all sin, torment and sorrow, and to give us true peace. It is used as "comfortable words" in the office for the Holy Communion, because Christians, in a manner, do then come to Christ by faith, to receive refreshment and strength for their souls. To come to Christ, now that He is in heaven, is to obey the directions of repentance and faith which He has left. The Church is His Body visible on earth to show us whither we must go to receive grace. The *rest* which is promised is forgiveness of sins and sanctification here, with hope of eternal rest in heaven.

29. *Take my yoke.* A yoke is an instrument used by farmers to couple oxen together. It is of no great weight, yet of strength sufficient to confine restless and stubborn beasts. It is an apt figure of the religious system or training of Christianity, which is light upon the willing and obedient, and yet able

CHAPTER XII.

AT that time Jesus went on the sabbath-day through the corn,[a] and his disciples were an hungered, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat.

a Deut. 23. 25.

to restrain the natural rebellion of our carnal minds. To take the yoke of Christ is to be His disciple and keep His commandments. Compared with the Jewish system, or the natural condition of fallen men, it is very light and easy. He is *meek*—that is, gentle, not imposing heavy burdens and galling distinctions, as the Pharisees did upon their disciples.

30. This passage (verses 25 to 30) is used as the Gospel for St. Matthias's day, February 24th. St. Matthias was chosen by the *lot* of the apostles, with prayer, to fill the vacancy of the apostate Judas. Acts i. 23–26. This Gospel is chosen on the presumption, that he was one of those humble, obscure, and docile disciples, to whom the praise in it applied. He is not spoken of again in Scripture. Both Eusebius and St. Jerome affirm that he was one of the seventy disciples. The latter states that the province assigned him was one of the Ethiopias, or, as some think, Cappadocia. He was murdered by the pagans, as Dr. Cave judges, by crucifixion.

The following remarks of the learned and pious Bp Beveridge on this passage are worthy of a devout perusal: "Hearken to your Saviour's call, and resolve to go unto Him. In order whereunto, observe these few necessary rules: First, be sure and continue firm and steadfast to Christ's Holy Catholick Church, and particularly to that sound part of it with which you are connected, and suffer not yourselves to be seduced from it upon any pretence whatsoever. For if you either separate yourselves, or be justly separated from the Church, which is Christ's body, you will be thereby deprived of all communion with Him who is the head of it. But in the next place, think it not enough that ye are outward and visible members of Christ's Church, but live up to the rules and orders of it, constantly using the several means of grace and salvation, which are thereby administered to you, prescribed by Christ Himself as the way whereby we go unto Him; such as fasting, and praying, and praising God, and hearing His Holy Word publicly read and expounded to you, and especially receiving the sacraments of Christ's mystical body and blood, ordained on purpose for our more intimate access unto Him and communion with Him, that we may partake of the influence of His Holy Spirit, and the merits of that death which He suffered for us. Lastly, content not yourselves with the mere outward performance of these and the like duties, but perform them heartily and sincerely with your whole souls as well as bodies; still believing and trusting on Christ to make them effectual to the purposes for which He has appointed them. Do this, and He will soon make good His word and fulfil His promise to you. For He, by His Holy Spirit, accompanying the means, will so enlighten your minds, rectify your wills, and regulate your passions, as to sanctify your whole souls, and reduce them to a right temper and constitution, and then he will soon discharge and absolve you from all your sins, and give rest to your souls, not only from all evil here, but in God Himself, the chiefest of all good hereafter."

CHAPTER XII.

1. *At that time, &c.* See Mark ii. 23–28, and Luke vi. 1–5. The season of the year is thought to be April, A. D. 26. True era, 32. St. Luke says that it was the "deutero-proteron," *i. e.* second-first Sabbath. This word has caused some difficulty. The best opinion seems to be that Jesus had gone to the second passover of His ministry (John v. 1), and had cured the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda on the Pascal Sabbath (April 20). This act increasing the enmity of the rulers, He prudently leaves Jerusalem after the days of unleavened

2 But when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful[a] to do upon the sabbath-day.

3 But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did[b] when he was an hungered, and they that were with him;

4 How he entered into the

a Ex. 31. 15.

b 1 Sam. 21. 6.

bread (Wednesday,) and is now on His way back to Galilee. The second-first Sabbath was reckoned from "the morrow after the Sabbath" (Lev. xxiii. 9–11.), which happened in the Pascal week, when a sheaf of barley was offered before the Lord, in the temple. From this day the Jews reckoned seven weeks to the Pentecost (Lev. xxiii. 15, 16), called the feast of weeks, or feast of the harvest. Ex. xxiii. 16. The seasons are different in Judea from our own. "The crops in the southern part of Palestine and in the plains come to maturity about the middle of April, but in the northern and mountainous sections, they do not become ripe till three weeks after, or even later." On the 9th of May, between Hebron and Carmel (2750 feet above the Mediterranean), wheat was ripening, and Messrs. Robinson and Smith had there "a beautiful illustration" of the fact we are now considering. "Our Arabs were 'an hungered,' and going into the fields, they 'plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands.' On being questioned, they said this was an old custom, and no one would speak against it; they were supposed to be hungry, and it was allowed as a charity. We saw this afterwards, in repeated instances." ¶. *Through the corn.* The word *corn*, everywhere but in the United States, means the smaller grains, such as wheat, barley, &c. Such grains they could get out of the husk easily, by rubbing the ears in their hands, as they walked through the cornfield. Indian corn was not known till the discovery of America, and is properly called maize. ¶ *To pluck the ears of corn.* This action itself was lawful (Deut. xxiii. 25), nor do the Pharisees accuse them of taking what was another's, but only for *doing manual labor* on the Sabbath day. They reasoned that the small labor of plucking and rubbing out the grain with their hands was to be considered as *harvesting and grinding*, and therefore forbidden.

2. *It is not lawful.* The Jews from the most profane violations of the Sabbath and other laws of God in one age, had now gone to the other extreme, of superstition. They were over-strict and scrupulous. The Pharisees watched Jesus, to do Him harm with the people, and by this suggestion, intended to injure Him. The laws of the Jewish Sabbath or Saturday are recorded Ex. xx. 10; xxxv. 2, 3; Numb. xv. 32–36. Jesus answers them by fair arguments. 1. The account of David eating the shew-bread. 2. The priests' work in the temple. 3. The passage of Hosea. 4. The end or design of the day. 5. His claim to be "Lord also of the Sabbath." Mk. ii. 28. Let it be noted that our Lord does not admit the act to be sinful. For if a violation of the Sabbath, He would have condemned it, however insignificant it may have seemed.

3. *What David did.* The analogy between David fleeing from Saul, and the Son of David withdrawing for awhile from the enemies who sought His life, is very striking. David and his company were hard pressed by king Saul. In great extremity he came to Abimelech, the high priest, to ask for food to save his company from starvation, and found only the shew-bread in the tabernacle, asked it of him, and ate it with his companions. This story, recorded 1 Sam. xxi. 1–7, was well known to the Pharisees, yet they believed David a prophet and righteous man, and therefore, in this case, justified him. Therefore, in a case of like necessity, to avoid hunger and weariness, the disciples were only

house of God, and did eat the shew-bread,[a] which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only [b]for the priest?

5 Or have ye not read in the law[c] how that on the sabbath-days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath,[d] and are blameless?

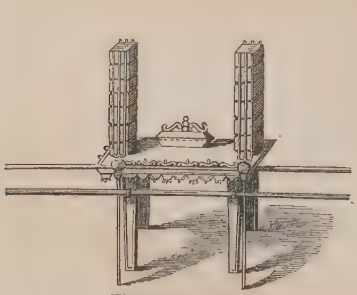
6 But I say unto you, that in this place is *one* greater than the temple.

7 But if ye had known what *this* meaneth,[e] I will have mercy,

a Ex. 25. 30. *b* Ex. 29. 32, 33. *c* Num. 28. 9.

d John 7. 22, 23. *e* Hos. 6. 6.

doing as he had done,—keeping the spirit of the law, though not the letter. Necessary labor may always be done on the Lord's day. ¶ *Shew-bread.* In Hebrew it is "the bread of faces." It was ordered to be set forth in the outer court, first of the tabernacle, and afterwards of the temple. Ex. xxv. 30; Lev. xxiv. 5–9. It, with wine and salt, was considered holy, and was a theocratic emblem, or visible witness to the Jews, that God, their king, was dwelling in His "house," in their midst, and would be served by them in the same manner as earthly monarchs. Twelve loaves were kept on the prothesis or shew-table for a week, when twelve others were substituted. Those removed could be eaten by the priests only (Lev. xxiv. 9), and those it was that David ate. A



The Shew Table.

similar table is supposed by the rubric of the Communion office, to be provided in Christian churches.

4. *House of God.* Called so here with a peculiar beauty. It was the tabernacle in which God dwelt. The temple was not in existence in the age of King David. This bread was set forth as a symbol of God's dwelling in His house to rule over and bless His people. On a similar occasion Jesus called His body the temple of God. John ii. 19. Christians are now, in a spiritual sense, called the house or household of God, because He dwells in their hearts by faith.

5. *Read in the law.* Not these very words, but that such duties were enjoined on the priests by the law of Moses, as required them to do servile work on the sabbath. Numb. xxviii. 9–11. They were commanded to kill and sacrifice two lambs in addition to their daily service. The labor of killing the beasts of sacrifice, preparing them for the altar, removing the ashes, &c., was not small. They could do it, by the law, and be without sin: whereas the same labor done by an ordinary Jew, would have been a profanation of the day. The law of Moses is shown by this argument to yield to necessity. From which the Jews ought to have learned that it was inferior in importance to the law of preserving life. We may do all works on the Lord's Day which are necessary for preserving life and for the public worship of God, even in some cases at the cost of much labor.

6. *One greater than the temple.* That is *Himself.* To be greater than the temple, which was honored by the Jews as the most holy place of earth, as the dwelling of Jehovah Himself, was to claim equality with Him. Haggai (ch. ii. 7–9) delivered a remarkable prophecy to encourage the Jews under Zerubbabel, by foretelling that the smaller poorer temple which was then building,

and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.

8 For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath-day.

9 And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue.

10 ¶ And behold, there was a man which had *his* hand withered. And they asked him saying, [a]Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath-days? that they might accuse him.

11 And he said unto them,

a Lu. 14. 3.

would exceed the former in glory, when "the desire of all nations" should come. And we can explain this prophecy only by the faith that the Lord Jesus Christ was the "glory of the latter house," and coming in a more excellent way and covenant than He had come before in the Shechinah. Whatever therefore He permitted His disciples to do, was in fact a divine permission, as much as the labors of the priests in the temple on Mount Zion.

7. *If ye had known.* Superstition and malice had blinded them to the true meaning of the law and had led them into a violation of the spirit of it, in condemning the innocent. They were cruel in their rigidness, and while thinking to keep the letter, they destroyed themselves by crimes against the mercy and truth which God loves. The natural heart of man is constantly tending, even after all these lessons, to make the blessed mercy of God harsh and unlovely; and instead of the gentleness and humaneness of a living Saviour, to dwell on the severe legal justice of secret, and inexorable decrees.

8. *The Lord even of the Sabbath-day.* He is the Jehovah of the Old Testament who rested from His works, who gave the law of the Ten commandments, and hence the Son of God, able of His own divine right to order the day as He would. St. Mark adds that the sabbath was made for man, that is, to promote his happiness and good, and not man to be such a slave to the day as to suffer by his observance of it. Bp. Horsley speaks as follows: "The proper business of the day is the worship of God in public assemblies, from which none may without some degree of crime be unnecessarily absent. Private devotion is the Christian's daily duty, but the peculiar duty of the sabbath is Public worship. As for those parts of the day which are not occupied in the public duty, every man's own conscience must direct him, what portion of this leisure should be allotted to his private devotions, and what may be spent in sober recreations. Perhaps no better general rule can be laid down than this, that the same proportion of the sabbath should be devoted to religious exercises, public and private, as every person would spend of any other day in his ordinary business." It is customary to make use of the word sabbath when we mean a *day of rest.* Otherwise we do better to drop the Jewish word and say *the Lord's day*, or Sunday; to keep in mind the distinction between the first and seventh day. The observation of the Lord's day must rest upon the command of the Decalogue, for remembering one day in seven. But the manner of its observance on the continual customs of the Christian Church.

9, 10. *And when, &c.* See also Mark iii. 1–5; Luke vi. 6–10, for this same account. The words of St. Matthew *seem* to make this miracle follow on the same day. We have in this fact another proof that he did not follow the order of time, but more the order of subjects. It was on another sabbath, perhaps the next one, as we learn from St. Luke. ¶ *His hand withered.* By the palsy. See note ch. iv. 24. Dried up, and the muscles shrunk. The scribes and Pharisees, from this time forward, plot the destruction of Jesus. They watch Him, in order to effect this, and taking the advantage of the public assembly in the synagogue, they ask the question,

What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath-day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift *it* out?

12 How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath-days.

13 Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched *it* forth; and *it* was restored whole, like as the other.

14 ¶ Then the Pharisees went out, and‖ held a council against him, how they might destroy him.

‖ or, *took counsel.*

simply to find something for which to accuse Him. St. Mark says that He was moved to *anger* or holy indignation; and that He asked them whether it was better to save life on the sabbath and do good as He did, or to do evil and seek His death, as they were doing. And He presses upon them by the invincible argument, that if they would labor on the sabbath to save the life of an animal, could not He, to save life and do good to men? He asserts as a conclusion of the whole matter that *It is lawful to do well on the sabbath days.* The Evangelists leave us to imagine the chagrin and rage of the wicked enemies of Jesus.

11, 12. *Better than a sheep.* Of more value. By this simple and natural question, which all present, who were perhaps mostly villagers of Galilee, and owned sheep, and had often had occasion to consider this doubt in accidents happening among their rocky hills, Jesus settles the question more effectually than volumes of abstract proofs could do. He showed every one of them, that it was a law impressed on their very consciences, and practically allowed by them, that it was pleasing to God, to do well at all times, and to place charity above cermonial observances.

13. *Stretch forth.* When a miracle follows a doctrine as it does in this case, it becomes the proof of what was before said. 1. Jesus does not labor on the sabbath. It is an easy thing for Him to speak the word, and the hand is restored. The Pharisees cannot pretend that a *word* is unlawful labor. 2. He shows Himself to have divine power to sustain His claim to a right over the sabbath. The conduct of the man may instruct us in the ways of a right faith. He *might* have said to this order, "how can I stretch out my hand? It is withered." But he obeys, and that which he *could not* do, the divine energy acting with his will, and supplying what was lacking in him by nature, he *does.* So, many men would say, "I cannot, I cannot," in spiritual things, when they should say I "*will* not." We must obey the commands of God, knowing that if we will to do so, God will give us sufficient strength. Surely no one should *wait* for grace, as too many claim to be doing. The command to all is, "awake and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Say not "I cannot," but *act* at once in faith in Christ's help, and the power to serve Him will be given.

14. *Then the Pharisees went out.* They consulted together, joining the Herodians to their plot. See Mark iii. 7–12. They were enraged and alarmed for their own power, which would fall before such a prophet. The Herodians were probably a party of men, friends of Herod, who like him paid little regard to the Jewish laws and customs. If they were a religious sect at all, it is probable that their tenets were very loose, and far different from the school of the Pharisees. Herod had sought the life of the infant Jesus: his followers were hostile to Him to the last. Dean Prideaux supposes two chief opinions as belonging to them. 1. That the dominion of the Romans over the Jews was just, and should be religiously respected. 2. That many customs and usages of

15 But when Jesus knew *it*, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all.

16 And charged them that they should not make him known:

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by [a]Esaias the prophet, saying,

18 Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: [b]I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.

19 He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.

a Is. 42. 1.

b John 8. 34,

the idolatrous nations around them, were worthy of respect and adoption by a *liberal* mind. They would not be exclusive.

15, 16. *Withdrew himself.* St. Mark says *to the sea*, that is, of Galilee, and adds that great multitudes came to Him from the most distant parts of Palestine, from Jerusalem, Idumea, from beyond Jordan, and from Tyre and Sidon. These were all Jews, living in those places. He seeks comparative privacy, to avoid the hostility of the Pharisees and Herodians, as His hour had not yet come. He charges the crowd not to think that they will do Him honor by making Him more known; doing this, probably, as one means of instructing the disciples that He does not intend to array against the Jewish rulers any thing like an army; or to nourish sedition, for which they are all too ready. This verse following the other, which tells the hatred of the rulers, seems to intimate that there was at this time a great readiness for sedition in the minds of many, which was promptly suppressed by Jesus. It is evident that He had the opportunity to have propagated His religion, if He had intended it, by the sword.

17, 18. *That it might be, &c.* This refusing to excite the "great multitudes" to civil war, was so utterly unlike the common use and wishes of *men*, that St. Matthew explains it from a divine foreordination as declared by Isaiah, xlii. 1–4. It was conduct very different from what they as Jews had at the time expected from Him as Messiah. But how entirely does it agree with prophecy. And how evident it is to us that the original idea of such conduct in the Founder of our religion, could not have originated within the heart of man. ¶ *My servant. My beloved.* Christ was the only begotten and beloved Son of God (Matt. iii. 17), accepted and beloved in His human nature also. He was doing God's will while refusing to do as men would have had Him do. He was called *servant* or minister, because He came in form as a man (Phil. ii. 7), in which form, for the space of His natural life He was to obey the will of God, as an example to His brethren. John iv. 34. ¶ *Shall show judgment.* He shall teach the will of God, or His covenant of religion and righteousness; the terms on which He will judge men. It is so used in Ps. cxix. 7–20. This covenant of the Gospel He would make easy to all nations. The word Gentiles does not require us to suppose that the multitudes were pagans. For such an event as the coming to Him of Gentiles, would have been particularly noticed. They may have been proselytes, but were probably Jews dwelling in those countries, and for the time *representing* those nations.

19. *He shall not strive, &c.* He shall not be a warrior and conqueror, as St. Matthew would have us think was at this time easy for Him, by human means even, to have been. He was neither to shout for war, nor cry as the herald of an army—but He was to bind up the wounds of the humble and troubled children of men. These three phases, to strive, i. e. to make war, to *cry*, *i. e.* to shout in the street, as a soldier in the thick of battle,

20 A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.

21 And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

22 ¶ Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb; and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw.

23 And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son[a] of David?

a Ch. 22. 42.

and "his voice heard in the streets," seem the phrases to describe a warrior. He would be unlike them; a Prince of Peace, gentle, meek and condescending to heal the wounded. It is this character in Jesus, which has separated Christians as nations from all others.

20. *A bruised reed.* A reed growing on the water-courses, and bruised or ready to fall and die. This is a striking image of feebleness. It pictures to us the contrite heart, humbled, bowed down almost to despair, by infirmity and sin; so sensitive that a harsh law or sentence would destroy all hope. Such He will not crush by indifference or severity, but will visit, soothe and restore them. ¶ *Smoking flax.* The expiring wick of a lamp, for which purpose flax was used by the Jews. How affecting a picture of a soul ready to perish, in which hope is almost gone. Such an heart He will revive, will renew the light of gladness, and like one pouring fresh oil into a lamp, will give it hope of eternal life. ¶ *Judgment unto victory.* Until the cause of righteousness and truth is triumphant—till wars cease and conquerors fail, till the Gospel of peace is universally known and practised. This would be the manner of His conquest of the world. Alas! that Christians do not more carefully strive to show forth His character, and conquer by the might of love.

21. *And in His name, &c.* In the book of Isaiah, the words run "and the isles shall wait for His law," and in the foregoing verse "until He bring forth judgment to truth." In both cases St. Matthew, according to his custom in citing from the Old Testament, gives the *sense* of the passage, dropping partly its ancient Hebrew dress. "The isles" are often in the Old Testament used as a convenient phrase *for the Gentiles generally,* being the isles east of Judea—namely, Greece and the Archipelago, which were then occupied by the heathen. To the isles, to all pagan nations, the offer of free salvation in Christ would be made.

22. *One possessed, &c.* The same account is given by St. Mark, iii. 22–27; St. Luke xi. 14–28. See note, ch. iv. 24. This miracle is a sequel to the prophecy. As He restored this broken reed, so would He drive out the evil spirit, which held possession of the Gentile world.

23. *Is not this the Son of David?* Is He not the Messiah? The cure of this poor demoniac man, seems to have been a signal instance of power. He had been as it were doubly possessed; and could not hear nor see. Besides this, scribes had "come down from Jerusalem" at this time to seek to injure Him before the people (Mark iii. 22), and the miracle is done boldly in their presence, and that of a great multitude. The effect was as St. Matthew relates. The common and unlearned people ask, is not this the Messiah? He agrees to the very letter of prophecy, preaching as it were by a living argument and sign that He fulfilled the words of the prophets. Is. xxxvi. 5. Surely the Messiah could not do greater things than these. John vii. 31. Jesus was at this time, again in Capernaum, after the Passover.

24. *Beelzebub.* A name taken from an idol of the Philistines of Ekron. 2 Kings 1, 2; 2 Sam. v. 11. It meant the god of the fly, and was worshipped to obtain deliverance from the injuries of

24 But when the Pharisees heard *it* they said, This *fellow* doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

25 And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself, is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself, shall not stand.

26 And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?

27 And if I by Beelzebub cast

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that insect: or according to others, it signified the god of filth. It was a name of bitter contempt in the mouths of the Pharisees. ¶ *When the Pharisees, &c.* There is this difference to be observed between ancient and modern unbelievers: the latter attempt to deny that any miracles were done by Christ: the former, seeing His works, and afraid to deny facts, ascribed them to an evil agency. We have therefore the hard-wrung testimony of the Pharisees to the fact that Jesus worked miracles, that is, deeds beyond the reach of any unaided human powers. We cannot for a moment admit their explanation that He did this by assistance from the devil, since they have been the severest blow that his kingdom has ever received. The devil cannot do works of pure goodness. We must therefore receive the testimony of the ancient, to the shame of the modern unbeliever, who will do well to ponder the description given by Christ, of those who wilfully reject the evidence of right reason in religion. It is easy to fall. How far had these Pharisees fallen. Men often allow a cavil against religion to dwell in their minds from carelessness or love of some sin, which religion condemns, who see not that the cavil will soon lead to other cavils and objections, and finally to contempt of the divine word, and to utter reprobation. Some doctrines may seem unnecessary to the unlearned Christian, but let him be sure that he is only safe in clinging to all the portions of truth which are stamped with the approval of holy men of all ages.

25. *Knew their thoughts.* He may possibly have heard these remarks about Beelzebub, as they had dared not only to conceive, but to utter their blasphemies in murmurs to each other. And it seems more than probable that in denouncing their crime, Jesus should reply to their words. Or, He may intend to show them their boldness in murmuring against Him, by showing that He exercised another and well known attribute of God in which it is not known that Satan has any part (Ps. xliv. 21; cxxxix. 2;) that He could read the hearts of men without the help of their words. ¶ *Every kingdom, &c.* They are refuted in their false reasoning by a simple and universal fact. A family, or state, at war with itself, is soon destroyed. And however great the malice of Satan, it is not supposable that he can be guilty of a folly, for which he would soon be despised by men. If he destroys his own work, destroys at one time what he builds at another, he is worthy of ridicule—men can teach him better wisdom than that. The evil one is endowed with the intellect of "an archangel though in ruins," an intellect far above the suspicion of such inconstancy and infirmity of purpose. He has in every age divided the Church by the chameleon forms of schisms and heresies, often wrought up with great skill. But his inventions soon manifest his hand in them, and one by one die out, even as trees planted in the earth without roots.

27. *Your children.* Your disciples or followers. Jesus shows them that their cavil against Him could be retorted upon them with more truth than they had imagined. Your own followers, against whose actions you have heretofore made no objection, if you have not actually taught and encouraged them so to do, pretend to cast out demons, in

out devils, by whom do your children[a] cast *them* out? therefore they shall be your judges.

28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the [b]kingdom of God is come unto you.

a Mark 9. 38; Acts 19. 13.

29 Or else, how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.

30 He that is not with [c]me, is

b Dan. 2. 44. *c* 1 John 2. 19.

some cases, and you find no fault with them. You claim that in them it is only the power of God, which can do this; it is therefore foolish and wicked in you now to urge such a cavil against Me for doing the very same thing. That some among the Jews claimed this power of exorcism is evident from Mark ix. 38; Acts xix. 13, 14; and Josephus' Antiquities, viii. 2. The Christian fathers, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, and others, tell us the same. It may have been a pretence, but the power may have been granted to some persons, in order to prepare the minds of the nation beforehand for this astonishing demonstration of the Divine power in Christ. David had driven the evil spirit from Saul by his holy harpings. 1 Sam. xvi. 23. And something of the same kind may have been customary, though abused by evil arts. The power of exorcism of evil spirits lingered for several ages in the Christian Church. ¶ *They shall be your judges.* They will arise in judgment against you, to prove that you are actuated by ill-will and obstinacy.

28. *The Spirit of God.* St. Luke says "the finger of God," i. e. the power of God. Ex. viii. 19. St. Matthew is exact in his words, for the power spoken of is exercised in the might and inspiration of the Holy Ghost. After Jesus had left the earth, this same power in Christians was considered as a gift of the Holy Ghost. The words kingdom of God, mean the beginning of the Messianic reign. It is near enough to you to require you to believe and seek it. The kingdom of God is near, and therefore the kingdom of Satan is invaded and weakened. They ought to have rejoiced in the signs of this conquest of evil, and prepared their hearts to receive a kingdom which began in such works of mercy. But truly they loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

29. *Or else, &c.* Otherwise, if the kingdom of the Messiah has not come in My person, how can this power be granted to Me? Jesus now pushes them to extremity. They knew that no prophet had ever claimed such power. They knew, also, that the prophets had foretold that this power would belong to the Messiah. Is. xlix. 25; liii. 12. Therefore, if He was not the Messiah, this power to cast out devils, as He had done, would be *impossible*, according to their own scriptures. But it was possible it belonged to Him; for they had seen Him enter the strong man's house; that is, actually rescue by force one over whom Satan had held undisturbed power. The argument was unanswerable. But alas, a *perverse will* is invincible. While we feel a just indignation against those wicked Jews, let us beware of their sin. Many opinions are linked in one chain, and we, too, by our wilful errors, may now be opposing the power of a right faith as truly as they did the Person of Christ.

30. *He that is not with me, &c.* In this contest of light and darkness, of the kingdom of God and of Satan, there is no middle ground. There is no third power, to which these miraculous works can be attributed. The Jews were obliged either to join with Christ, or be against Him and against God. To gather with one and to scatter, is taken either from the image of a war, with two opposing sides, or a harvest-field, where the reapers either gather the harvest, or insanely waste it. These words are reversed in Mark ix. 40; but with senses entirely different. Jesus is here speaking of the war on Satan's kingdom, but there of that charity which the disciples were to show to such

against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad.

31 ¶ Wherefore I say unto you, All[a] manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy *against* the *Holy*

a Mark 3. 28; Lu. 12. 10; Heb. 10. 29; 1 John 5. 16.

Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man,[b] it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven

b 2 John 7. 12; 1 Tim. 1. 13.

as used His name, while they were too timid to follow Him. The maxim is true in our age as well as then. The hosts of men in Christian lands who make no profession of religion, are, in fact, bars and stumbling-blocks in its way. They are *scattering*, or opposing the reign of pure religion.

31, 32. *Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.* Blasphemy is injurious and malicious speaking against God or His attributes. See note ch. ix. 3. In these remarkable words, we have a declaration of the limit of divine mercy, which has sometimes given great trouble to serious minds. What then is this blasphemy against the Holy Ghost? St. Mark (iii. 30,) shows us that the Pharisees had been guilty of it, "*because* they said, He had an unclean spirit."—Their sin, then, was maliciously ascribing a miracle of Divine power, to the agency of Beelzebub. It is to be noted that it is not said here a *sin* against, but, "blasphemy against," which is explained again by "speaketh against the Holy Ghost." Words are in the oriental form of speech "the fruit of the lips," and manifest the character of the tree, *i. e.* of the innermost mind. Evil speaking against the Holy Ghost, does not become unpardonable, otherwise than as it proves a reprobate heart. Therefore while a man can repent, mourn over sin, or walk humbly with God, while he feels the stirrings of desire to serve Him and to pray to Him, we judge, with scriptural authority and the best divines, that he is *not* reprobate, has not finally grieved nor quenched the Spirit (Eph. iv. 30; 1 Thess. v. 19), and so may repent and be forgiven. The reprobate condition of a soul is described in Hebrews vi. 6, 9. It happens not, as some penitent persons imagine, at the *beginning*, but at the *end* of a Christian walk, and is often called *apostasy* or *reprobation*. Until one has tried and enjoyed the means of grace, been for a while a Church-member and received the influences of the Spirit, and *afterwards* turns away as an apostate, denies the Gospel, ridicules the faith, scoffs at religion, and becomes entirely *hardened* and indifferent, it is not likely that he can have arrived at this malicious and dead state of mind, when he can, as the Pharisees did, ascribe the power of God to the agency of the devil. Saul of Tarsus hated Christ and vilified His religion and destroyed His disciples: yet he did it ignorantly and was forgiven. Penitent man! have you done *more* than he did? Yet he was forgiven. A few opinions of divines of the Church are added. The learned and admirable Dr. Waterland says, "The Pharisees in their spleen and rage against the Gospel—and being *wilfully blind*, chose rather to impute Christ's works to the devil"—which act he says was their blasphemy. Bp. Porteus—with whom many agree—says: "This crime was confined *solely and exclusively* to the Pharisees, who attributed miracles wrought by the Spirit of God to the agency of evil spirits. Since therefore miracles have long ceased, and this blasphemy relates *solely* to those who saw miracles, &c., it is *impossible* for any one in later times to be *literally* guilty of this unpardonable blasphemy to *its full extent*." The Bishop means that this *literal form* of the blasphemy ceased with the age of miracles. He would however agree with Archbishop Wake,

him, neither in this world, neither in the *world* to come.

33 Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: [a] for the tree is known by *his* fruit.

34 O generation of vipers, how

[a] Ch. 7, 16–19.

who says: "There are some sins of a like nature which may be committed by us—apostasy from the Christian religion, after having been convinced of its truth, and made partakers of its promises: apostasy from the truth and purity of the Gospel, for the sake of some worldly fears, or of some present hopes and advantages." Archbishop Tillotson terms "*approaches* to it," "a profane scoffing at religion, and the Holy Spirit of God which dwells in good men; perverse infidelity notwithstanding all reasonable evidence; obstinacy in a sinful or vicious course; sinning against the clear conviction of our consciences,"—which being long continued, "God *may* withdraw His grace from us, and leave us "hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Archbishop Secker terms it "an incurable disease within, prevailing over the most powerful and the last remedy which Divine wisdom thought fit to use." Dr. S. Clarke calls it "an obstinate rejecting the last means of conviction, and an evident token of incorrigible malice." None need despair of grace, who will confess their sins, and seek by repentance and faith to serve and love God. ¶ *Against the Son of man.* In His human nature. Many mistook the circumstances of Christ's coming, and at first denied Him as the Messiah, who afterwards repented and were pardoned, and became good Christians. Thus did some of the persons who repented under St. Peter's preaching. Acts ii. 37, 38. Thus did Saul of Tarsus. Acts ix. 1, 17. Such language in the Jews at that time did not imply in all cases, that hardened and incorrigible hatred, which would not repent. It might proceed from prejudice and be repented of, or in some cases from pardonable ignorance. ¶ *In this world.* This is a Hebrew form of expression, for *never* be forgiven. St. Mark hath it "hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation." No sin unpardoned here, will be pardoned hereafter. To be in danger of condemnation, is not exactly the same as being condemned. Jesus would have a place for repentance for all men, while life lasts.

33. *The tree good, &c.* The general principle that a tree is known to be a sound and useful tree by its fruits, is often applied by our Lord, to the proof which a man's actions afford of his heart and principles. It seems here to admit of two applications; 1. As an explanation of the preceding verses concerning blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. Such malicious language is justly condemned, because it proceeds from a nature irrecoverably corrupted. As the fruit is elaborated by the secret sap of the tree, and shows the nature of the tree, so do the words of the mouth show the heart, from which come "the issues of life." Or, 2. It applies to our Saviour, and explains the general argument, that He had worked a miracle by divine power. It may mean "Judge of me as you do of trees, by their fruit. Regard Me either as good or bad according to My actions. I do works of mercy, and speak reverently of God. These results can come only from a pious heart." John ix. 25, 30, 33.

34, 35. *O generation of vipers.* A viper is a serpent common in the east, the poison of whose bite causes death with great agonies. See note, ch. iii. 7. As docile believers and pious persons are likened to doves and lambs, which are innocent and harmless animals, so the malicious and unbelieving are compared to goats, dogs, and vipers, according as they are sensual, foul, or malicious. The Pharisees had shown the hatred and venom of serpents, and deserved this epithet. Good works and fair reasoning could not be expected from them. They were entirely cor-

can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the[a] abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh.

35 A good man, out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things: and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things.

36 But I say unto you, That every idle[b] word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

37 For by thy words[c] thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

38 ¶ Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign[d] from thee.

39 But he answered and said

a Lu. 6. 45. *b* Ecc. 12. 14; Eph. 5. 4–6; Jude 15. *c* Prov. 18. 3. *d* Ch. 16. 1; Lu. 11. 20; 1 Cor. 1. 22.

rupted. The "treasure of the heart," the inward life and principles were all wrong, therefore the exhibitions of character were only such as could have been expected.

36, 37. *Every idle word.* A common mistake of the meaning of these verses shows the great danger which there is in separating any passage of scripture from its connection. By every *idle* word, we now mean any careless, familiar, innocent talk on subjects secular and social, opposed to serious conversation about religion, important business, death, and the like. But this is not the meaning of the word *idle* here. It signifies wicked, malicious, injurious, slandering, impious words, and is to be explained by the gross calumny which the Pharisees had uttered against Christ. To "give an account thereof in the day of judgment," means to be *tried* and tested by them, as proofs of *character*. James iii. 2–10. Now we cannot imagine that our social, insignificant words among friends will be sufficient to *justify* us; so the same will not of themselves condemn us. Those words which do either, are only such as manifest the real principles of our actions, whether we love God truly, or love the world and self. While it is a dangerous thing for a Christian to be marked for a foolish, unmeaning conversation, and more dangerous still, a profane and unseemly jesting, because such conduct manifests a state of heart too trifling to be fixed on serious matters, so it is an unfortunate mistake for him to affect an unnatural asceticism and rigidness of intercourse with his fellow-men. Many of the best and most serious Christians the world has seen, have been noted for a genial and pleasant gracefulness of conversation in their social relations. A mother's prattling to her babe may be as innocent, and as clearly prove a loving heart, as her tears over its grave. As members of a family, we should aim to give ease and grace to the rugged path of life, just as we plant flowers around us to adorn the ground we live on.

38. *A sign.* St. Luke (xi. 16, 29–32) says, "a sign from heaven." We are informed by St. Paul that the Jews sought after *a* sign, i. e. some particular exhibition of Divine glory, which they believed was to be shown by the Messiah. We must go back then to the prophets, from whom the Jews received this impression. We read in their writings of a surpassing glory which would appear in the times of Messiah (Is. lxii. 1, 4); of "one like the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven" (Dan. vii. 13), and similar predictions, which are to be fulfilled at the second coming of Christ. These the Jewish rabbis misunderstood. They wished Jesus to assume that glorious state, to show *the sign from heaven*, as well as those upon earth, and bring about the golden age of which their Scripture spake. Satan tempted Him to show a similar sign. Ch. iv. 6; see John ii. 18, and vi. 30. The evil and adulterous, i. e. the carnal mind of the Jews prevented them from perceiving the real meaning of the prophecies.

to them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas.

40 For as Jonas[a] was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this gene-

[a] Jonah 1. 17.

39. *Adulterous generation.* A wife who should leave her husband and commit sins against the marriage covenant is called an adulterous person. The Jews were bound to the law by a holy covenant, having all the sacredness of the marriage vow (Is. liv. 3), even as Christians now are wedded in the most solemn manner to Christ. Eph. v. 24, 32. When the nation committed idolatries, or sought help from pagan nations, they received this epithet: they merited it now because of their unbelief. They refused Christ when made known to them by evident proofs. Therefore He said they shall have no sign but that of the prophet Jonas, i. e. the sign and omen of woe which that prophet was to the Ninevites. So "Ezekiel is a sign." Ez. xxiv. 4. "Isaiah walked barefoot for a sign." Is. xx. 3. Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites to foretell their destruction. The Son of Man, after His resurrection, would be a sign to prove to the Jews the terrible fate of their guilty city, which His death brought on it.

40. *As Jonah, &c.* See Jonah i. 17, and ii. The word whale does not determine the kind of animal which became the typical grave of Jonah. The Greek word κητος means a huge and monstrous fish, the exact kind the ancients knew too little of the salt sea to determine. The writer of the book of Jonah says only, "the Lord had prepared a great fish." There is no reason to insist on the kind, though it is by no means decided that it was not a whale. ¶ *Three days and three nights.* We have here another instance of the folly of any cavil at the words of Scripture, by those ignorant of the customs of the people among whom it was written. Jesus was in the grave but two nights and parts of three days, and it is likely that Jonah was in the fish the same length of time. Lu. ch. xxviii. 6. If we had no knowledge beyond the modern divisions of time, we would be at a loss to explain the difference between the words of Christ and the actual event. It is, however, exactly correct, according to the Hebrew customs, as Dr. McKnight shows, by a comparison of various passages in the Hebrew Scripture. The Jews had no word corresponding to what we mean by a natural day of twenty-four hours, or from midnight to midnight. Their meaning, therefore, was expressed in Greek by a word meaning a *night-day*, and to this they added the custom of saying, night and day, for what we mean by a natural day, or a revolution of the earth. Therefore, to express the time of a part of three consecutive days, they were obliged to say, three night-days, or three days and three nights. See Esther iv. 16 compared with v. 1, and 1 Sam. xxx. 12 compared with verse 13. Esther said she would not eat for "three days, night or day," yet on the third day she went to the king to ask him to her banquet. The Egyptian whom David found is said to have eaten nothing "three days and three nights," yet again he says it was the *third* day since he fell sick. See also 2 Chron. x. 5 and 12. The Jews in reckoning time counted a part of a day as a day, and began their days in the evening. Our Saviour was crucified on Friday, was buried part of Friday, all of Saturday, and rose on Sunday morning, and was, in their language, three days and nights in the earth. ¶ *Heart of the earth.* The interior or "lower parts of the earth." Ps. lxiii. 9; Eph. iv. 9. That abyss of which St. Peter spoke (Acts ii. 27) where "He went and preached to the spirits in prison."

ration, and shall condemn it: because they[a] repented at the preaching of Jonas: and behold, a greater than Jonas *is* here.

42 The queen[b] of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon *is* here.

43 When the[c] unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.

44 Then he saith, I will return

a Jonah 3. 5. *b* 1 Kings 10. 1, &c.; Lu. 11. 31, &c. *c* Lu. 11. 24.

1 Pet. iii. 19. The separate state and place of spirits the Jews imagined to be in the region under the earth.

41. *Men of Nineveh. Nineveh*, the capital of the Assyrian empire, was a large city on the river Tigris, northeast of Babylon, built in early times by Asshur. Gen. x. 11. It was about fifty miles in compass, surrounded by a wall 100 high, with 1500 towers, each 250 feet in height. It is computed to have contained 600,000 inhabitants in the time of Jonah. They were idolaters and very wicked, but being summoned to repent, they humbled themselves and reformed. God spared them and their city for 200 years longer. Nahum and Zephaniah also prophesied their destruction. The former foretold the manner of it: "The gates of the river shall be opened." Nah. ii. 6. During the siege of the Babylonians, the walls were injured by an inundation of the Tigris, and the enemy entered. The latter has described its present desolation. Zeph. ii. 13, 15. Important discoveries are now being made in the mounds of half-burnt bricks, which alone mark the site, if indeed they do mark it, of ancient *Nimroud*, "the rejoicing city, that dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, I am, and there is none beside me: how is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in." ¶ *Shall condemn it.* Compared with that generation, Nineveh had acted prudently and piously. She would show by contrast the awful obstinacy and wickedness of the generation which crucified the Lord.

42. *The queen of the south.* 1 Kings x. 1–13. Of Sheba, in the southern part of Arabia Felix, which from its great distance from Jerusalem is called the uttermost parts of the earth. If she came from Arabia, she may have been a descendant of Abraham by Keturah, one of whose sons begat Sheba. She may have had a traditional knowledge of the true God, and came to hear Solomon "concerning the name of the Lord." She was deeply affected by the visit and gave praise to God. Her conduct in going so far to seek for better knowledge of God, her generosity and open confession, will all manifest in a more hateful light the hardness of heart which was shown by those to whom Jesus was speaking.

43. *When the unclean spirit, &c.* Jesus warns the Jews that the devils, which He had cast out, would return, and finding them impenitent, would take possession of their hearts with greater malignity than ever, and would hurry them on to ruin. Satan, cast out by the labors of Christ and His apostles, and being unable to control the nation, while Christ lived, had fled to the deserts around Palestine. But he would return on finding that they had refused the Messiah, would repossess them with seven-fold violence. Or, the parable may have warned those individuals out of whom the demons had been cast to beware how they neglected the time of repentance given them by God's mercy. As Archbishop Cranmer has it, "Although the house of our conscience be once made clean, and the foul spirit be once expelled from us in baptism or repentance; yet if we become idle and take not heed, he will return, with seven worse spirits, and possess us again." ¶ *Through dry places.* The waterless

into mine house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth *it* empty, swept, and garnished.

45 Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man[a] is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

46 ¶ While yet he talked to the people, behold, *his* mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him.

47 Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.

a Heb. 6. 4; 10. 26; 2 Pet. 2. 20, 22.

regions; the deserts. The Jews, Arabs, Egyptians, and others believed that deserts were the haunts of devils, genii, spirits, &c. This opinion is by no means contrary to Scripture or reason. The words wild beasts, owls, satyrs, &c., in Is. xxxiv. 14, Jer. l. 39, are given only by supposition. The original words added in the margin by the translators, signify that they were uncertain of the meaning. They are supposed to be foreign names of evil spirits. In Rev. xviii. 2 the opinion is plainly expressed. The parabolic form here made use of by our Lord, and the spiritual sense of the apostle in the book of Revelation, prevent any argument being drawn by us from these passages, that such an opinion is necessarily a true one. Evil spirits may, as the Fathers believed, wander in the air, and we may believe it. We can only say that it is not inconsistent with any knowledge of ours. But on the other hand it is easy to explain these passages, without a belief in such wanderings of the demons. *Seeking rest and finding none.* An expressive image of self-torment. As a man in a fever, who in vain turns to every side for ease; as one whose whole nervous system is disorganized, cannot remain still, but is driven about by restless madness; so a wicked soul is its own incessant curse. Goodness is the soul's health: the reward promised to saints is perfect soundness, and peace.

44. *Garnished.* Adorned, and inviting his return. Alas, what a garnishing is that which tempts the wicked one to return! Judas, as an individual, is an example of the truth of this parable—the Jewish nation, after the crucifixion, illustrated this in terrific outlines. Holy spirits seek their abodes only in the souls which manifest the desire for grace and spiritual purity. But how evil must that heart be, whose best faculties become only as baits and allurements for the foul spirits to take up their abode in it. Many attractions and qualities which are valued by men, are but parts of this evil adorning. Strong will, mere physical beauty, great talents, &c., are often the vanities which have changed the destiny of the soul, and given it up to the powers of evil.

45. *Seven others.* Seven was a favorite number with the Jews, and very often used to denote any finished or complete number, also to signify several persons or things, answering to our word many. 1 Sam. ii. 5. The rabbis were fond of extracting mysterious meanings from such circumstances: in which some Christian writers seem inclined to imitate them. We frequently use the word dozen and score, in the same way as seven is used here, meaning many. ¶ *Even so shall it be, &c.* These words show the application of the parable. We can now say so it *was* with that generation. The account given by Josephus of the last years of Jerusalem, presents a picture of infatuation, demoniac madness and crime, such as the world has never elsewhere beheld.

46. See also St. Mark iii. 31–35; St. Luke viii. 19–21. The Virgin, as it is likely, had come from Nazareth seeking Him, and she may have brought with her, or found them in Capernaum,

48 But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?

49 And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

50 For [a]whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

a John 15. 14; Heb. 2, 11; 1 John 3. 1–3; 5. 1–5.

either the disciples who were the cousins of Jesus, or other relations. ¶ *His brethren.* The persons meant here are probably the children of Mary, wife of Cleophas or Alpheus, and sister of Mary the Virgin, namely James the less, and Thaddeus. Ch. xiii. 55. If other cousins are meant, they came with the Virgin from Nazareth. The word brethren in Hebrew has often only the force of kinsmen. "The ancient and general opinion," says Dr Whitby, "was, that they who are called our Lord's brethren were the sons of Joseph by a former marriage. But St. Jerome, comparing together John xix. 25, Matt. xxvii. 56, and Mark xv. 40, infers that they were the sons of His mother's sister, the wife of Cleophas; it being consistent with the language of the Jews to call cousins by the name of brethren." It is generally agreed by the vast majority of Christians, ancient and modern, that the Virgin had no other children, after the miraculous conception. See note on chap. i. 25.

48. *Who is my mother?* He does not imply any want of love for His relations. See Lu. ii. 51; John xix. 25–27. But by this striking and beautiful address, He shows the hearer that all who believed in Him, received His words and recognized the spiritual relations of His kingdom, would be received into intimate, affectionate relationship. The superstitious worship of the Virgin, and the notion that she is the fit mediatrix between us and her Son according to the flesh, is shown to be false and foolish. Her relationship to the Son of man gives her no greater influence with the Almighty God than other repentant sinners can claim.

49, 50. *Doeth the will, &c. Obedience* is the Scriptural test of our discipleship. Here, he that obeys is called by the endearing names of brother and sister. Why? Because he that *obeys*, does all that the will of God requires. He believes, which is the first step and beginning of future obedience. He repents and confesses sin, he receives the sacrament which seals his adoption to be a son of God, loves God and the brethren, and becomes transformed from the world and renewed in the image of Christ. He grows in grace, and proceeds from strength to strength in the spiritual life, till he becomes a full grown saint, or, as St. Paul says, "a perfect man." The Spirit of God dwells in him, and shows him to be a "partaker of the divine nature." He is incorporated into the Church everlasting, which is the future Bride of Christ, and is made one with Christ, by a relationship more dear and tender than those social ties which are produced by the natural order of human society. He is one with Christ, one with the Church; he lives by faith and love, and leans on the hope of future acceptance before God, and future blessedness in the world of glory. Surely this relationship is far above that which the Virgin and His kinsmen could claim by nature. This spiritual relationship the humble and pious Virgin could doubtless claim by grace. All generations call her blessed—blessed that she was worthy to provide the earthly tabernacle of the Son of God, more blessed that she was a faithful and humble believer of her Saviour. "Oh God, whose blessed Son was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil, and make us the sons of God, and heirs of eternal life, grant us, we beseech thee, that having this hope, we may purify ourselves even as He is pure; that

CHAPTER XIII.

THE same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the seaside

2 And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship,[a] and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

3 And he spake many things

[a] Lu. 5. 3.

when He shall appear again with power and great glory, we may be like unto Him, in His eternal and glorious kingdom, where with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Ghost, He liveth and reigneth ever one God, world without end. Amen."

CHAPTER XIII.

1. *The same day.* This was probably on some afternoon in the fall of the year. Dr. Jarvis remarks upon this chapter: "The crowd which assembled, and which, as St. Luke says, 'were come to Him out of every city,' was so great, that he entered into one of the small vessels on the lake, and taught them, as they stood on the shore. It was His custom to derive topics of discourse from objects within his view. The lake is surrounded with fruitful hills, and it was now just seed-time; for 'sowing,' says Jahn, 'commenced in the latter part of October; at which time, as well as in the months of November and December following, the wheat was committed to the earth. Barley was sown in January and February.' Lifting up His eyes, therefore, and beholding a sower sowing his seed, He took His parable from that circumstance, representing the effect which the broad-casting of the word of God would produce upon men of various tempers, dispositions and pursuits. The parables of the tares, of the grain of mustard seed, of the treasure hid in the field, of the leaven put into meal, of the sower's repose after he had sown his seed, until the harvest, and many other parables of a like nature (Mk. iv. 33,) seem to have been uttered at the same place and on the same occasion. His being on the lake suggested the idea of fishing for pearls, and hence the parable of the pearl of great price. So also the drawing of a seine led our Lord to compare His kingdom to a net. It is probable, too, that He continued His instruction till the evening had set in; and the appearance of a light on the surrounding hills, throwing its beams afar off, led Him to speak of the impossibility of concealing the truth." See also St. Mark iv. 1–34; St. Lu. viii. 4–18.

3. *Parables.* A parable is literally *something laid alongside* of another thing, to measure, compare, or explain it. It is sometimes applied to short, pithy sentences or maxims. But in the Gospels, it usually means "an illustration drawn from natural things to instruct men in spiritual." Bp. Porteus defines it as "a short narrative of some event or fact, real or fictitious, in which a continued comparison is carried on, frequently between sensible and spiritual objects; and under this similitude, some important doctrine, moral or religious, is conveyed." It differs from a fable in this respect, that it never represents impossible circumstances, such as trees walking, animals talking, and such like. It was a common mode of instruction in the East. Our Lord never violates the reality of things. There is simplicity, aptness, force, propriety, and pathos in all that He has uttered. Many advantages are gained by teaching in parables. 1. Simplicity. When spiritual and unusual truths are taught by analogies which are well known, the mind easily grasps them. 2. Interest. Pleasing narratives of common events have a charm for all, especially for common minds. 3. Discretion. Truths are presented in a manner to leave the actual understanding of them to the will of the hearer. What the Jews did not, the disciples could understand. 4. Reproof. When the mind is prejudiced or obstinate, a parable may drive home a seasonable truth. So in the case of Nathan's parable to David. 2 Sam. xii. 1–7; Lu. xx. 19. The chief propriety of par-

unto to them in parables, saying, [a]Behold, a sower went forth to sow;

4 And when he sowed, some *seeds* fell by the way-side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:

8 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundred-fold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold.

9 Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

a Mark 4. 2. &c.; Lu. 8. 5. &c.

ables in the Gospels is peculiar to them. Jesus taught by *preparation*. The disciples could not understand the *spirituality* of His kingdom, until the Holy Spirit should come down with power to teach them. John vii. 39. Parables would not be forgotten. The scenery, incidents, turns of conversation, would be easily remembered until they could be understood. Jesus filled their memory with *forms* of thought, which the Divine Spirit was to fill with spiritual meaning. He drew on their memories, by these earthly narratives, the great outlines of "the truth" (John xvi. 7, 13), the spiritual system of the Second Covenant. Therefore (ch xiii. 34) "without a parable spake He not unto them." See Mark iv. 33, 34. Parables, narratives, analogies from nature, are still a happy form of instruction for children.

> Dim or unheard the words may fall,
> And yet the heaven-taught mind
> May learn the sacred air, and all
> The harmony unwind.

3. *Sower went forth to sow.* The action is simple. Perhaps the hearers could see the farmer at the very time, casting the seed into the ground. Yet the profoundest knowledge of human nature, the most perfect analogy to the spread of the gospel, both in the world at large and in the hearts of individuals, are alike manifested in it.

4. *The way-side.* The farmer as he goes to the field, drops the seed by accident along the hard and trodden path, or in the road, or in some stony places, among briers. In this respect the sower of gospel seed differs somewhat from the sower here mentioned. He casts the seed of the word in all places, with a generous hand, for his field is the world. But it often fails; for there must be some preparedness in the heart to receive it. But whether men receive or refuse it, he casts it still. ¶ *Fowls.* The birds.

5. *Stony places.* Places where the earth was lodged in the hollow places and basins of rocks. In these the rains and heat would cause a more rapid growth than in fallow ground. In Palestine, while the rains last, any thing may grow. The grass springs luxuriantly in places where it has little or no root, as for instance on the flat roofs of houses. Is. xxxvii. 27. As soon as the rains cease, and the hot suns succeed, the vegetation withers. ¶ *Forthwith.* Immediately.

7. *Among thorns.* Into thorny or briery places. Certain brambles and coarse briers, in hot climates, have a prodigious power of growth. Their roots occupy the whole earth, and suck the moisture from every thing else; their matted foliage covers the few plants which may struggle up to the surface, and shuts them out from the light. They *choke* them, *i. e.* they deprive the seed of their share of light, moisture and air.

11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

12 For whosoever[a] hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

a Ch. 25. 29; Lu. 9. 26.

13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand.

14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy[b] of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand;[c] and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

b Is. 6. 9. *c* Ez. 12. 2; Acts 28. 26–27; Rom. 11. 8; 2 Cor. 3. 14, 15.

8. *Good ground.* Ground which had been properly prepared by the plough and rain, from which the stones and thorns had been removed. We can learn from this no more than that some preparation is necessary to receive the word of God. It must be an *honest* heart to receive it effectually; or should it seem to arrest us suddenly, and fall into our souls irresistibly, we must the more seek to make way for its roots, and clear away offences. ¶ *Hundredfold.* Each seed produces a hundred times sixty, or thirty times as much.

10. *Came and said, &c.* St. Mark says that they did this "when they were alone." Mark iv. 10–12; Luke viii. 9, 10.

11. *The mysteries of the kingdom.* By mystery, we commonly understand that which is not or which cannot be understood. It means also a *sign* as an index of something concealed. Rev. i. 20. And of the grander and more spiritual doctrines of the gospel, we may say, after all the study of them, there remains much that deserves this name, since the human mind cannot grasp those spiritual truths, and the evil heart cannot sympathize with them perfectly. The mysteries of the kingdom are the doctrines concerning the Church, and the future extension of it to the Gentiles, by the preaching of the word; which were as yet concealed. Rom. xi. 25; xvi. 25; Eph. iii. 3, 4, 9. It was given to the disciples, to receive this preparatory teaching, and in some measure to profit by it, because they were obedient and attentive, and were to be the future teachers and rulers of the Church. 1 Cor. iv. 1. The others *would not* receive the doctrines of the gospel, even if plainly revealed, and therefore they were not yet disclosed in their fulness.

12. *Whosoever hath.* He that has and uses his knowledge rightly. We must bear in mind that in the great matter of *a free offer of salvation* Jesus made *all men equal.* What then makes the difference? they themselves. The meaning here is clear and satisfactory. All received the "hearing of the word." But into some hearts, which listened with candor and pondered earnestly, it increased to more knowledge. The seed grew. In the others it died. He foresees this. Jesus could not properly foretell to all, "At the second Passover from this, you Jews will crucify Me. I will rise again in three days, I will ascend into heaven, send the Spirit, and at Pentecost the disciples will begin to preach this good seed of the word." It would have made scoffers, and interfered with His future conduct. He reveals this system gradually to the disciples, who "had" grace to listen. To the crowd He imparted it in narrations and parables, that they might search into them, if they would: might not be affected by what was future in them, if they desired to avoid it.

13. *They seeing, see not.* St. Mark (iv. 12) and St. Luke (viii. 10) differ slightly, saying, "That seeing they may not see;" but mean the same. They state the fact, that the people would not hear, and therefore the truth was uttered in a form to leave them

15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

16 But blessed [a]*are* your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear.

17 For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see *those things* which ye see, and have not seen *them;* and to hear *those things* which ye hear, and have not heard *them.*

18 ¶ Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.

19 When any one heareth the word[b] of the kingdom, and understandeth *it* not, then cometh the

a Ch. 16. 17; Lu. 10. 23. 24.

b Ch. 4. 23.

free to hear or not. *Hear not* means to be as if they did not hear; to despise and reject. They had seen the greatest miracles, but the sight did them no good, they were as much opposed as before. They had heard the plainest offers of mercy, but were deaf to their charms. Why then should the more secret truths of the gospel, which were yet incomplete, be exposed to the scorn of unbelievers? God gives light. If a man blinds himself, He does not force him by miracle to see. We cannot blame the parables of Jesus for being obscure. They could have been received with profit by any honest hearers.

14. *And in them is fulfilled.* The passage of Isaiah (vi. 9, 10) was applied by him to the people of his own age, and by St. Paul (Acts xxviii. 26, 27), as characterizing the nation in every age. Isaiah asks, "How long shall this blindness last?" And the Lord answered, "until the cities be wasted, &c."—extending it into a prediction. It is a true picture of the Jewish nation. They were always obstinate and rebellious, and in the latter years of their history, reprobate. Our Lord intimates that they *would* not receive Him, no matter what He would do; and that He would not therefore do what he had forbidden in His disciples—cast the pearls of Christian doctrine before their sensual and prejudiced minds.

15. *Waxed gross.* Became fat, as applied to the body; sensual and stupid as applied to the mind. They were like a man overcome with obesity, too heavy and dull to hear or see, sleepy and brutish. Such is the vicious mind of a prosperous, worldly man, in respect to spiritual things. He is carnal—that is, fleshly. The spiritual spark is buried in a heap of earthly cares and pleasures. Deut. xxxii. 15. ¶ *I should heal them.* There is an analogy between the diseases of the body and the sins of the soul. They whose hearts are surfeited with carnal objects, are unwilling to listen to the Gospel, lest it may sting the conscience, destroy their present ease, and alarm them into making exertion to escape future woe. They prefer to close their eyes. This they now do by avoiding Church and the Bible, by dress and levity, cavils at the doctrines which they hear, and keeping the company of profane and scoffing persons.

16. *For they see.* You have received what was offered, have obeyed the call to follow Me, have been able to exercise faith in My miracles and doctrines, which you have seen and heard. This faith others seem to despise. You are blessed. Having used so well what has been given you, it will be increased, and enlarge your joys and purify your hearts.

17. *Many prophets and righteous men, &c.* Though there have been the glorious company of prophets and good men, of whose fame you have been

wicked[a] *one*, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the wayside.

20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy[b] receiveth it;

21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while:

a 1 John 2. 13, 14. *b* Ez. 33, 31, 32; John 5. 35.

for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word: and the care of this world, and[c] the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

23 But he that received seed

c 1 Tim. 6. 9; 2 Tim. 4. 10; Heb. 6. 4–8.

proud, yet your lot is more blessed than theirs. They looked to the future for My coming; you see it, and receive fuller knowledge, greater gifts, and more excellent promises than they had. Abraham is said to have seen the future times of the Messiah: "Abraham saw my day, and was glad" (John viii. 56), and Moses, looking to that future day, "to have esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt." Heb. xi. 26. In the first ages of the world, good men walked by faith in the future coming of the Messiah. The light of their knowledge increased from age to age, but never equalled the full revelation of the Gospel. If, then, they were so holy under smaller privileges and lesser graces, why may we not be holy? why need we faint at the dangers of the way? If we fall, our condemnation must be severer than that of any people in the wide world.

18. *Hear ye, &c.* Listen to the parable again; to its inner meaning. You, to whom it is given to know the mysteries of My dispensation (v. 11), hear therefore this, your own future duty and experience as sowers of the word.

19. *Understandeth it not.* To understand, in Scripture, is to receive into the heart, to appreciate. Our Lord does not make distinctions of grace to depend on the intellect merely, but on the use of all our faculties. He who lays the Word to heart and obeys it, does all he need do to be saved. There are three kinds of false hearers mentioned: 1. Who receive, as it were not receiving. 2. Who receive not into their affections. 3. Who receive without expelling their sinful passions. ¶ *The wicked one.* The devil. When he can fortify the mind, in advance, with infidel cavils, make it a thoroughfare for every unclean passion, his work is most sure to be successful. How many mere nominal Christians there are, who only wait to be tempted by him, to find that the "word of the kingdom" has no power over their passions. 1 Pet. v. 8.

20, 21. *Into stony places.* The seed grows in some measure; seems awhile to be promising. This description of hearers were more clearly seen to fall away in the times of persecution of the early Church. But they are seen to cumber the ground of the vineyard in all ages; weak, trifling and unstable Christians, into whose hearts the true principles of piety have no more descended than the fibres of a plant into the flinty rock. James i. 23–26. The wicked wish, to conform to the lowest standard of piety, and keep in with the world, marks the unstable Christian. ¶ *Anon.* Immediately, hastily, &c. ¶ *Is offended.* Stumbles and becomes discouraged, at the difficulty in his way. See note, ch. xi. 6. No man suffers long for any thing short of *principles* and convictions.

22. *Among thorns.* While the rains lasted, both thorns and the good seed grew; when they ceased the bad prevailed. So often we see in youth, while the heart is yet untried in the ways of the world, inexperienced in its own fierce passions, and ignorant of the long summer of endurance yet before it—

into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth *it*; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundred-fold, some sixty, some thirty.

24 ¶ Another [a]parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which soweth good seed[b] in his field:

25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

26 But when the blade was

a Is. 28. 10, 13.

b 1 Pet. 1. 23.

we see it allowing the roots of anger, love of dress, business, pleasure, desire for worldly comfort and splendor, and such like, to remain and grow. They refuse the voice of warning. They show many virtues and some graces, for the good seed also grows, and they think that they will yet put down the thorns. But the sterner times of life come, the roots of evil will not yield. The man finds that it must now be at the cost of pain and long toil to extract the weeds. His strength fails, his hope sinks, he finds out his error, but yields to the care of the world, and the love of riches, and invents excuses and false hopes to hide the fact that the good seed has become hidden and choked in the thorns. Anxiety for the world's comforts, and avarice, close the scene. 1 Tim. vi. 7–11.

23. *Good ground.* St. Luke says, "in an honest and good heart." A sincere and honest desire for truth, a candor in hearing it, and a willingness to "hear, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest it," while they do not bestow on us any merit, by which we can claim forgiveness of sin, are yet necessary as a preparation for faith. Nothing that we can do will merit in any degree justification, but, we must still do it in order that we may receive it. We are justified by the alone merit of the atonement of Christ: but honesty of purpose, readiness to hear, courage to obey, are necessary, as qualities in us without which we can neither believe nor repent.

24, 25. *The kingdom of heaven, &c.* See note ch. iii. 2. This parable declares another *mystery* of the kingdom or Church of Christ in the earth. It would not have uninterrupted prosperity. Evil disposed men would arise in it; heretics, who would corrupt the faith; false brethren who would be as "roots of bitterness" to trouble it; weak brethren to torment others and to cavil at their progress, and wicked persons to harass the rulers of it, and to cause the Church to be evil spoken of. They must expect these troubles, and be patient under them. This parable grows naturally out of the last. The sower after his labor rests, and waits for the seed to spring up. The tares appear with it; the servants would destroy them; and from this arises an instruction of the final judgment. It is often a stumbling-block to impatient men, that the Church should be left in this imperfect state. To remedy this they have sought from time to time to invent stricter rules, to fence or weed out the evil tares, that the wheat may grow alone and bear fruit. But such theories and attempts, wanting the divine command, are without success. No section of the Church has existed without a mixture of good and bad; and the sect-spirit, which aims to root out the evil, has constantly in the end corrupted and destroyed the wheat also. It is God's will that these imperfections should exist in this state of trial. We may and should cut off by authority, open, offensive sinners, but we must not expect all to be complete and zealous Christians. It is a part of the divine plan that the good and evil should struggle together here. When light conquers darkness, there must be twilight somewhere; when leaven changes a mass of dough, there must be the antagonism of the active and the dead elements in it. Only in heaven

sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

30 Let both grow together until the harvest;[a] and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn[b] them: but gather the [c]wheat into my barn.

31 ¶ Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a

a 1 Tim. 5. 24. *b* Mal. 4. 1. *c* Lu. 3. 17.

will the Church be presented pure and spotless. The parable may explain the inward and spiritual experience of a Christian. There too he finds wheat, sown by a Divine Agent, and tares springing up from the soil; good and evil in commotion and contest. Can he root up the evil? Can he destroy one half his soul, one set of affections, and leave the other, the good, unharmed? Can he eradicate anger, and leave zeal; hate, and leave energy to resist the devil; rashness, and leave courage? No; groan as he may over the evil, he must struggle against it until, by gracious habits, the good becomes supreme and the evil subdued and chained—content that at last the evil one and all his wicked works will be banished, and leave him pure and holy. ¶ *Tares.* The darnel, a weed which resembles wheat, and is always found in company with it. It would be impossible to separate it from the wheat while growing, without destroying the wheat also. At the harvest it can be easily removed. It represents the false members of the Church, the imitators of the true, which are found in every age.

26, 27. *The blade.* The stalk on which the ear of grain comes. It is a beautiful touch of the picture that the discovery is not made until the wheat is ripening, when it can least of any time be disturbed by weeding it. It shows us that, according to the divine wisdom, the evil is so inextricably mingled with the good, that it is better for us to suffer those troubles from it, which we feel, than by adopting sects, or making unscriptural distinctions, or seeking a solitary life, fly to other evils.

29. *The wheat with them.* The servants represent the ministers and governors of the Church. They seeing the imperfections of many Christian disciples, would expel them and have a perfect church, without one lax, one inconsistent member in it. But what human judgment would suffice for such a work? What man, even the holiest, can pretend to sever the good and the erring Christians?

30. *The harvest.* Until the day of judgment. Then the reapers are the angels. They will receive commission to separate the good from the bad. It is beyond doubt the duty of ministers now, to excommunicate all notorious offenders; all who are a shame to the Church. And we are bound, each of us, to aid, whenever it is proper, to bring such offenders to the proper censures of the church. Still the day of judgment will show many a stalk of tares, where we saw only wheat, and of wheat where we neglected, or by prejudice could see only the hope of the hypocrite. The duty of discipline is limited, but that of charity has no such limits. Let us beware how we indulge a spirit of censoriousness against the brethren. Let us rather labor with our might to be faithful in every good work.

grain of mustard-seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:

32 Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree,[a] so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

33 ¶ Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures[‖] of meal, till the whole was leavened.

34 All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them:

35 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet,

[a] Ez. 17. 23.

[‖] The word in the Greek is, *a measure containing about a peck and a half, wanting a little more than a pint.*

31, 32. *Mustard seed.* No other seed so small as the mustard is commonly planted in gardens, which produces so large a tree in time. It is very suitable for the use made of it. Cavillers, if they had sense and candor as a grain of it, would see that this was all that was asserted by the Saviour, and would not manifest their folly, by remarks on the exact bulk of the seed, whether any other was then known by the Jews as small or smaller. As Jesus is speaking of seeds which men take and sow in their ground, He compares this kind only with such. It is smaller than wheat, rye, barley and such like, and yet springs into a huge plant compared with them. It grows in Palestine to the height of nine or ten feet, quite large enough to afford a shelter to the birds. How fit an emblem of the Church of Christ. It began in the smallest and weakest form, among a few unlearned men of Galilee. Yet in a short time it had given shelter to thousands of anxious souls in all nations. Seeing this success, we are compelled to behold the hand of God in it. And in like manner the individual Christian may see the natural progress of spiritual grace in his soul. It is a seed of the Holy Ghost, implanted in the act of connection with the Church. 1 Cor. xii. 13. By prayer and holiness it is fostered and grows. The Christian goes on in the strength of faith to hold right opinions, to cultivate gentle dispositions, and to do works of piety and mercy. The giving this seed is the act of God. Conversion, i. e. repentance, is our act, for we are bidden to *do* it (Acts iii. 19; James v. 19), God helping us, when we convert, repent, or turn away from sin. Regeneration, or the sowing the seed, is God's act, we not resisting, when He makes us His children in Baptism. The seed is then given, as we believe, by the promise of Christ. Titus iii. 5. By prayer, by love and obedience, and Christian duties, we foster it into growth. The Christian is thus relieved of all anxiety as to the certainty of God's doing His part in sowing this seed, and left to undivided efforts to do well his own part, in cherishing the gift.

33. *Another parable, &c.* Leaven or yeast is an element used in making bread. The principle of Christianity would be infused by the Church into the corrupt mass of mankind, and by a silent, steady progress change the nature of men, and in time, the whole moral face of the world, and make it civilized, orderly, and holy. It would be, for a while, in dire struggle with evil, and little noticed by the world at large, but having in it a principle of divine life, it would conquer and renew the race. These two parables apply to the course of individual piety in the Church. The gift of the Spirit is like the grain of mustard seed, small to appearance, at the first, but results at length in all the fruits of a holy life. And, like leaven, it works out silently a purer and better

saying,[a] I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;

38 The field is the world; the good[b] seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children[c] of the wicked *one*;

39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.

40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be at the end of this world.

41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that ‖offend, and them which do iniquity:

42 And shall cast them into a [d]furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

43 Then shall the righteous [e]shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father. Who

a Ps. 78. 2. *b* 1 Pet. 1. 23. *c* John 8. 44; Acts 13. 10; 1 John 3. 8.

‖ or, *scandals*. *d* Rev. 19. 20; 20. 10. *e* Dan. 12. 3; Rom. 8. 18.

life, changes and sanctifies the old man, which was corrupt. We must, however, always bear in mind that to *adapt* a parable is not the same as to explain it. The simple meaning of the words relates to the Church as a body.

34. *And without, &c.* This must be taken with a limitation. He spake nothing to the people generally concerning His kingdom or Church, except in analogies. For on matters of duty, of His own Messiahship, &c., He often instructed the multitude by direct teaching, as in the Sermon on the mount. There He spake to their reason words of which they could judge. But now, speaking of that which was yet future and concealed, of which they were not able to judge, He taught them by parables, according to St. Mark, "as they were able to bear it." Mark iv. 33.

35. *By the prophet, &c.* The prophet Asaph, the chief of the singers in king David's time, 1 Chron. vi. 39. He was a prophet, and composed the seventy-eighth psalm. That divine song of praise deals in parables and "dark sayings," concerning the Jewish Church as a type of the spiritual kingdom of Christ. It is wonderful to notice the analogies which are opened to us by comparing that psalm with these parables. St. Matthew does not give the exact words (Ps. lxxvii. 2), but only the sense, to mark that Jesus was now revealing or fulfilling, that is, making plainer the meaning of that inspired composition. What in the psalm was spoken of the type in the past, is now shown to be near fulfilment.

36–43. *Declare unto us.* Explain to us the meaning of this parable of the tares. They say "of the tares." Their minds had fixed on that. His kingdom, in their sense of it, could have no such things in it. Jesus explains the real meaning of the whole, though He knew that even they, until their minds should be illuminated, could not appreciate the spiritual character of His Church, or get over their difficulty. In an earthly kingdom, tares would be wicked men and criminals. These, of course, would be rooted out and destroyed; but not so in a spiritual Church, of which they as yet had little idea. ¶ *Children of the kingdom.* Members of the Church; Christians. ¶ *All things that offend.* All scandals. If we separate this idea from the next, it

hath ears to hear, let him hear.

44 ¶ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure[a] hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and [b]selleth all that he hath, and [c]buyeth that field.

a Prov. 2. 4, 5.

b Phil. 3. 7, 8. *c* Rev. 3. 18.

must mean all imperfections and false notions shall be removed from Christians themselves, that the Church as a whole may be pure and spotless. Eph. v. 27. ¶ *Which do iniquity.* All wicked, immoral, heretical *persons.* Rev. xxii. 15. The angels are appointed to gather them out from the Church. Ch. xxv. 32. All heathen and unchristianized people will be judged, but these words show us that "judgment must begin at the *house of God.*" 1 Pet. iv. 17. Many, it is to be feared, have need to ponder deeply on this view, and engrave it upon their minds, that privilege is not piety; that one may put on all the forms of grace now, whose naked souls will seem far different, in that day, from what they now imagine. ¶ *Furnace of fire.* A heated furnace was used sometimes among the ancients for burning men alive. Dan. iii. 21. It is a symbol of hell-fire. We say a symbol, for the reality will exceed it in pain and anguish. We cannot form a certain notion, as yet, of the exact kind of body with which either Christians or sinners will rise. 1 John iii. 12. But it is certain that the *bodies of both shall rise,* and *after* that event, the wicked will be cast into "the lake of fire," both soul and body. Therefore, when our Lord uses such language of future torments, we judge that He speaks with reference to the anguish of that body which will be immortal to suffer. And when the fiercest pains of which we can imagine are used to warn us, how awful must the reality be! "From all evil and mischief; from sin; from the crafts and assaults of the devil; from Thy wrath and from everlasting damnation, Good Lord, deliver us."

44. *The kingdom of heaven.* See note ch. iii. 2. The Church in its spiritual sense, is adapted to the wants of man. The Saviour is now addressing the disciples, and informs them of the different manner in which men will receive their message. Two parables show two differing sorts of men. Some will find the value of the gospel, of a sudden, as it were—will hasten to sacrifice everything to obtain it, nor rest until they are secure of it. Others will be searching for spiritual good, trying all forms of philosophy, and studying all kinds of wisdom, till they find the true. They will give up all things else for it, and value it. ¶ *Hid in a field.* In the East, it is very common for men to hide their treasures in the ground, either in the ground floor of a house, or in the fields. And often the man who has concealed it dies, and its situation is known to none. Others succeed to the field and find the treasures. So universal is the excitement of Eastern people concerning hid treasures, that European travellers to the ruins of ancient cities, are constantly annoyed by the suspicion of the common people, that they have come for concealed treasures. Dr. Layard mentions, that he was seriously disturbed by this suspicion in the minds of the Arabs, while exploring the ruins of Nimroud, on the river Tigris. ¶ *And bought that field.* This action would be wrong in a Christian land. Whether it was reprobated by the Jews, or ancient heathen, is not determined. It is certainly neither commended or condemned here. The Saviour only seeks to explain the man's earnestness. We are to look at the point of the parable. No one can do wrong in seeking to have every possible right in the salvation of the gospel.

45, 46. *Pearl of great price.* See chap. vii. 6. Pearls are gems of great beauty and value. Some have been valued at $400,000, and some, as that belonging to Cleopatra, have figured in the history of nations. It is an article of commerce in the East, to this day. The illustration is striking. The dealer in pearls finds one of exquisite beauty

45 ¶ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly[a] pearls:

46 Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

47 ¶ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:[b]

48 Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever[c] the wicked from among the just,

50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

51 Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things?

a Prov. 3. 14, 15; 8. 11. *b* Ch. 22. 10. *c* Ch. 25. 32.

and rareness. It is the *unequalled* one, of which he has dreamed, while his divers have been searching for him in the deep. He loves it, will own it, sells all willingly to possess it. It will make him happy. Many a man in that age, some now, are like him, seeking rest and peace, anxious for spiritual wealth, till they find the gospel. Then, like the wise Jews of Ephesus, they bring "their books and burn them" (Acts xix. 19), and give up all to the obedience of the cross. One must have a power to feel his want of a Saviour, before he can willingly forego all else to secure His love.

47–50. The idea taught in this parable is much the same as that taught by the parable of the tares. The former was delivered to the whole multitude to warn them against resting in the mere privilege of Church membership, or as a witty preacher hath worded it, not "to flatter themselves that they are no *weeds*, because they grow among the *corn*:" this inculcates to the future ministers of the Church, the true idea of the visible Church, as in part imperfect. They would, in spite of all their efforts to prevent it, find many evil, many cold, indifferent, and some wicked persons professing the form of godliness, while destitute of its power. They must be patient with the weak brethren, nor unsparingly cut off all who were not as devout and perfect as they might desire. "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly administered according to Christ's ordinances, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same. Many parts of it have erred not only in their living and manner of ceremonies, but also in matters of faith." *Article XIX.* "And while it appertaineth to the discipline of the Church, that inquiry be made of evil ministers and members, and that they be accused by those that have knowledge of their offences; and finally being found guilty, by just judgment, be deposed and excommunicated; yet we must expect in the visible Church, the evil to be ever mingled with the good, and sometimes the evil to have chief authority in the ministration of the word and sacraments." See *Article XXVI.* We are not at liberty therefore to condemn and leave the Church, as some restless and proud persons have done, because, it hath those imperfections, which Our Lord prophesied should always be found in this state of trial. ¶ *Gnashing of teeth.* In the violent pains of nervous or muscular systems, in colics and deliriums, as also in the transports of rage and despair, the patient gnashes his teeth with agony. It is a frightful indication of the horrors of everlasting punishment.

51, 52. *Every scribe which is instructed.* The scribes as a class were wicked men, but the word is honorable in the sense here meant. A scribe here is a teacher, one knowing the law of

They say unto him, Yea, Lord.

52 Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe *which is* instructed[a] unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* an householder,[b] which bringeth forth out of his treasure *things* new and old.

53 ¶ And it came to pass, *that* when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence.

54 And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this *man* this wisdom, and *these* mighty works?

55 Is not this the carpenter's[c]

a Prov. 10. 21; 1 Pet. 5. 2. *b* 1 Cor. 4. 1, 2.

c Is. 53. 3; John 6. 42.

Christ's kingdom, and able to teach it to others. The ministers of the Gospel are the scribes of the Church, to copy out the law in their own hearts, minds, and lives, "as examples of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." 1 Tim. iv. 12. Jesus spent the three years of His ministry in instructing His disciples, and grounding them in the great truths of Christianity, so that they might be able to teach others. He instituted a perpetual succession of ministers, to carry on the line of instruction to the end of the world. They have endured from the Apostles times till now, in the three orders, Bishops, Priests and Deacons. Their office cannot be taken from them. It is unlawful for any one to perform their duties, unless called, examined, and ordained by Episcopal ordination. See the Preface to the Ordinal. ¶ *Treasure.* Rather a *treasure-house*, in which moneys, clothes and other useful and precious things were stored. An householder is one who has the charge of a family, whose duty it is to clothe, feed and govern them. The ministry are Christ's stewards over His family, the Church, 1 Pet. v. 2; 1 Cor. iv. 1, 2. They must be so well informed in Scripture, and the nature and constitution of the Church, that they may diligently instruct the people committed to their charge. They should, as they have solemnly vowed to do, "be diligent in prayers, and in reading the Holy Scriptures, and in such studies as help to the knowledge of the same, laying aside the study of the world and the flesh." And that they may benefit the family of Christ, it is important for the people to esteem them in their office, and to consider of what dignity and of how great importance it is to them. Heb. xiii. 7, 17. ¶ *New and old.* This does not authorize strange and novel doctrines, nor that vain curiosity after *original* thinking, which has seized many people. 2 Tim. iv. 3. The treasury being the Bible, the steward can draw only from it, and suit its truths to all, according to their wants.

53. *He departed thence.* In a few days afterwards. This is thought to have been in the month of October or November. And as we may well believe that the Saviour "fulfilled all righteousness," and acted as a pious Jew, He probably went to Jerusalem in December, to attend the Feast of the Dedication. These events fill up the remainder of the current year, the second year of His ministry, supposing that to have begun on the Epiphany, Jan. 6, A. D. 25. True Era 31. He now completes His 32d year.

54. *Into his own country.* Nazareth, which was a few miles from Capernaum. St. Mark says that the questions which follow, were asked on the sabbath day, after He had taught the people in their synagogue. It was common for any prophet or good man to address the people in the synagogue. His wisdom amazed those who had seen Him growing up among them.

55, 56. *Is not this the carpenter's son?* St. Mark adds: "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?" A carpenter here means one who worked in iron, wood, or stone. The ancient tradition of the Church is that Joseph was of

son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?

56 And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this *man* all these things?

57 And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.

58 And he did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.

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this trade. The question in St. Mark's gospel seems to show that Jesus followed the humble occupation of His reputed parent, until He began His ministry, and went about "His Father's business." This fact in the history of Jesus, ought to humble the foolish pride which is predominant in many hearts, of despising honest industry. There will always be ranks and classes in society, and honor will be due to each, according to the influence it has upon the public good. Some are called to serve Christ in places of honor, as the rich counsellor Joseph of Arimathea, the learned member of the Sanhedrim, Nicodemus. Others in the lower walks of life. The duty of each is to keep to his own station, with a modest and just temper, neither envying those above him, nor despising those below him, in the ranks of society. A Christian should act well his own part, and do his duty in that station of life, to which it hath pleased God to call him. If in an humble and laborious occupation, he should remember that Jesus lived in just such a rank, and chose His earliest and most honored followers from tradespeople and laborers. Be industrious and contented. If you do your duty in a Christian spirit, as says an eloquent Bishop, "thy relations and portion too are great and rich, for thou hast God for thy Father, Christ for thy brother, and the whole heaven of stars for thine inheritance." ¶ *His brethren, sisters.* His kinspeople. See note ch. xii. 46.

57, 58. *Were offended.* They slighted Him for the meanness of His parentage, and rejected His doctrines from prejudice to His person. ¶ *A prophet, &c.* A common proverb. As they had often seen the proverb true, so they should have profited by it, and not again have fulfilled it, to their own shame. ¶ *Did not many mighty works.* St. Mark says that He laid His hands on a few sick folk and healed them. But *because of their unbelief*, their invincible prejudice against Him, He could not induce them to listen to His doctrine, and improve by it. Our Saviour did His wondrous works for their effect in producing that faith by which the soul is healed. He did not wish to do them before men who refused to see a prophet in their townsman. These same Nazarenes sought to take His life. Lu. iv. 29. Familiarity had blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts. The gospel is in our hands, we have heard its sacred words from youth up, and imagine that it has nothing which we have not understood long since. This very familiarity inclines us to neglect it, and while others less favored than we are will gladly seize and profit by its truths, we suffer time to fly by unimproved. Like the foolish virgins, we sleep with the lights burning at our sides. But the coming of the Bridegroom, will find many such among the lost, who will awake to find that familiarity with the gospel, has been their bane; to them "a savor of death unto death." Oh, reader! awake to righteousness, study, search the Scriptures. There are mines of treasure, flowing brooks of refreshment, drops of a balm of Gilead for healing, of which you have never in your wildest conceptions yet dreamed. Ponder the word of God, and let it make you wise unto salvation. Be not "ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the *power of God unto salvation* to every one that believeth: to the Jew first, and also to the Greek," the Gentile of any name or nation. Rom. i. 16.

CHAPTER XIV.

AT that time Herod the Tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus,

2 And said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works[‖] do shew forth themselves in him.

3 ¶ For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put *him* in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife.

4 For John said unto him,[a] It is not lawful for thee to have her.

5 And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.

6 But when Herod's birth-day was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.

7 Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.

‖ or, *are wrought by him.*

a Lev. 18. 16, and 20. 21.

CHAPTER XIV.

1. *Herod.* See Mark vi. 14–16; Luke iv. 7–9. There are three men of this name, and four of the family mentioned in the New Testament. See note ch. ii. 19. This was Herod Antipas, or the tetrarch. Acts iv. 27. He received a part of his father's kingdom, namely, Galilee and Perea. He first married a daughter of Aretas, whom he dismissed for love of Herodias. He was banished by Caligula to Gaul, and the province given to Herod Agrippa.

2. *And said unto, &c.* Herod was a Sadducee, and denied a resurrection. But a guilty conscience terrified him into a forgetfulness of the opinions of his sect. He had slain John to please a lewd woman, against his own convictions. From St. Mark vi. 15, we see that this fear had taken fast hold of him. He would not believe those who offered other explanations of the miracles of Jesus. He could only see the consequence of his own crime hanging over him. It was a common opinion of that age; that "it was easy for a good man to return to life." Josephus' Antiq. xviii. ch. 2.

3. *For Herod, &c.* Mark vi. 17–20; Luke iii. 19, 20. This wicked woman was wife of Philip, the brother of Herod Antipas, whose wife was living, and niece to the latter; a connexion forbidden by the laws of God. Lev. xviii. 14–16; xx. 21. He fell in love with her on a journey to Rome, while stopping at his brother's house. He persuaded her to leave her husband, and divorced his own wife for her sake. Herod at first heard John gladly, and reformed in many particulars, but when John reproved him for this connexion, it roused the hate of Herodias, at whose instigation he was imprisoned. Thus does one crime lead to another.

6. *Herod's birth-day.* In monarchical countries, the birthday of the king has from the earliest ages (Gen. xl. 20) been observed with various festivities. This birthday was concluded with a supper to all the nobles of Galilee. What adds to the crime, is the season chosen for it. On such days the king usually pardons criminals, and is supposed to be inclined for the time to show mercy. ¶ *The daughter of Herodias,* and Philip, named Salome. We must suppose this exhibition of herself immodest. There is hardly a kind of dance of which we read in history, that she could have practised, but was improper for a modest woman. It shows the corruption of Herod's court. They aped the manners and crimes of Romans who had been corrupted by the Greeks. If this wretched girl's dancing display partook at all of the lascivious motions of the Greek dances, she was a fit daughter of such parents. Dancing, though perhaps in itself innocent, has been the bait to many a crime. It should be regulated by the strictest regards to modesty and propriety, by the parents who permit it.

7. *Whereupon he promised, &c.* It was

8 And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger.

a foolish and wicked oath. He received the government of his kingdom from the Romans, and had no power to give it away. It was a mere boast. The rashness and madness of it could be exceeded only by the horrible purpose to which it was perverted. He had no right to call on the gods to witness a promise which was thus made in a merry party; and when made, he should have rebuked her for such a shallow trick upon his words. If a parent promises a child "any thing it wants," he is very foolish to give it, on account of such a promise, what will injure it. Herod promised this dancing-girl all she could ask for—meaning all she would be expected to ask for in return for such a feat of dancing. He should have refused her this bloody request. Oaths like this are forbidden a Christian. He cannot be bound by them if they break any command of God or law of man, and so must not make them.

8 *Before instructed, &c.* She went out after the oath to consult her mother. ¶ *In a charger.* A large deep plate or basin. This sudden execution is agreeable to the customs of the East. As soon as any one is condemned to death, an officer, called a capidgi, immediately takes the warrant, bears it to the person, suffers him to read it, puts him to death with the bowstring, cuts off his head and brings it back to the monarch, as a proof that he had done his will. This woman could not be satisfied until she had seen the ghastly head of her enemy. Says Bp. Porteus, "We find here a most awful warning held out, not only to the female sex, but both sexes, to persons of all ages and conditions, to beware of giving way to any one evil propensity of their nature, however it may be disguised under popular names, however indulgently it may be treated by the world, however it may be authorized by general practice; because it is here seen that they may not only be led into the grossest extravagancies of that individual passion, but may also be insensibly betrayed into the commission of crimes of the deepest dye, which, in their serious moments, they always contemplated with the deepest horror."

9. *Was sorry.* This savage request, coming upon him so unexpectedly, from the lips of a young girl, made even the cruel and cowardly Herod Antipas to feel appalled. He disliked the boldness of John, in rebuking him in so sore a point, but he was unwilling to kill so good a man, and he feared the people, who looked upon him as a prophet. How calmly does the writer relate this event, without one word of anger. He evidently represents the story just as it happened. It gives us confidence in the truthfulness of the historian, who manifests such a regard for truth. ¶ *For his oath's sake.* Shame to do right marks a man as a coward. No matter if he can storm a breach before loud-mouthed cannon; if he dares not do *right* before those who "sit at meat with him," he is a coward. Herod should have rebuked the girl, confessed his folly in making such a boastful oath, and given her any other present fit for her dancing qualities, freed John, and begged of him to help him to dare to do right. Reader, there is too much of this wretched shame now, which bows us down before each other and makes us afraid. Let us have none of it! Settle as your principle, in little things or in great, *to do what is right.* Moderate your own temper to an awful regard to the right, and then go forth to avoid the error of Herod in this evil world. If not, if you bow down before others, and fear the looks of men, tell me how you differ from Herod in heart. God will judge you in the little crimes of social life which make a sacrifice of truth, as He judges Herod. You may never commit murder; but you may still laud that miserable, foolish *code of honor*, for which a man forgets all laws of God and man. You may go out to defy heaven on "the field," as veritable a

9 And the king was [a]sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded *it* to be given *her*.

10 And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.

11 And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought *it* to her mother.

12 And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus.

13 ¶ When Jesus heard *of it*, he departed thence by ship into a[b] desert place apart: and when the people had heard *thereof*, they followed him on foot out of the cities.

14 And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.

a Ecc. 5. 2.

b Ch. 10. 23.

murderer as was the boastful tetrarch of Galilee.

10–12. *And he sent, &c.* John died, as a saint should, and exchanged his dungeon, for a world where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest, a world, in whose light his rejoicing soul could discover the ways of God, and settle the questions which the poverty of the Messsiah had caused him. Here He had finished his work, and testified of Christ. The speedy end of the ministry of John the Baptist, as St. Chrysostom thinks, was designed by Providence, that the people might not be divided in opinion between him and Jesus. He had been in prison a year, and was sacrificed by a chance as it seemed. The wrath of man worked out the design of God. Herod was left to the stings of a guilty conscience. Of the daughter of Herodias, it is related by Josephus, that going at a certain time upon the ice, she fell in, and her head was severed from her body by the ice.

13. This remarkable passage in the life of the Saviour is recorded by all the four Evangelists. Mark v. 32–44; Luke ix. 10–17; John vi. 1–14. St. Mark tells us that at the same time that John's disciples came to find Jesus, His own returned from their mission, and that He went aside to avoid the people, who were thronging Him constantly—probably with a design of forcing Him to lead them in an insurrection against Herod. St. John records the sermon on the spiritual food of the Messiah's kingdom, founded on the miracle of the loaves and fishes. It seems that this was another of the instances, where the people showed themselves willing to take part with Him against His enemies. And to prevent it and any collision with Herod, He returns across the lake. ¶ *A desert place.* A place with very few inhabitants. Bethsaida was a small town, surrounded by an uncultivated region. St. Luke calls it "a place belonging to the city called Bethsaida." See note, ch. xi. 20. ¶ *On foot.* Rather by land, opposed to travelling by sea. They had no means of crossing the water, and could reach the place by going round the head of the lake. The people were probably deeply excited by the murder of John, and bent on hostile measures.

14. *With compassion.* Because they were left to the misguiding of such instructors as the Pharisees, and such rulers as the Herods. St. Mark, vi. 34, says, "because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and He began to teach them many things." Shepherds represent in Scripture the rulers and guides of a people. See note, ch. ix. 36. The first duty of a Christian is docile obedience, innocence of all guile and double-mindedness. If one will obey God with a single-mind, he will find safety, wisdom and pleasure in the flock of Christ the good Shepherd.

15. The place of this miracle is still pointed out to the traveller, as also the mount of Beatitudes near it. It is near

15 And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals.

16 But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat.

17 And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes.

18 He said, Bring them hither to me.

19 And he commanded the

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the modern village of Hatti. ¶ *The time is now past.* The hour of dining. It was time to dismiss the multitude, lest they suffer from hunger. It was kind and discreet in the disciples, to take this care of the people. Or, perhaps it was designed as a hint to Him to declare His intentions publicly.

16. *Give ye them to eat.* St. John informs us, that He asked Philip "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" This He had asked to prove him, that is, to try whether his faith would express itself as relying on Jesus and His divine power alone, or whether he would propose any way of obtaining food for so many. It was plain that they could not do it. Philip answered Him that the disciples had no means of procuring a supply, for that two hundred pennyworth of bread would not give each one *a little.* A penny, or denarius, was a Roman silver coin, worth about 15 cents, two hundred pennies being, therefore, about thirty dollars. This Philip mentions as a sum beyond their means. We have a strong proof in this of the poverty of the disciples, when so small a sum exceeded their common hoard. And we may learn that faith often requires of us to look to a higher power for our blessings than to the riches of this world. Let the Church but have faith and prayer enough in her divine work, and she will increase, and have enough and to spare for the myriads of the heathen. Christ bade the disciples, in view of this miraculous supply, "to labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life."

17, 18. *Five loaves.* Andrew answers Him, but hardly dreaming that it would be of any importance, that there was a lad in the crowd with "five barley loaves and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?" John vii. 9. The loaves were like large, thin biscuits. The Jewish bread was all of that form. The leavened bread was usually about half an inch thick; the unleavened bread thinner, and was broken by the hands, and not cut with a knife, as we cut a loaf. Barley was a common, cheap food. The fish were very small; perhaps the whole contents of the boy's store were hardly more than enough for his own consumption at one meal.

19. *He blessed and brake.* The people sat in "ranks by hundreds and by fifties" (Mark vi. 40), leaving room for the disciples to walk; and showing their numbers. The thin loaves were broken by the fingers. ¶ *And looking up to heaven, He blessed.* He gave thanks unto God as the author and giver of every good thing. He has in this act, now, as at other times, set us an example. Every Christian should sanctify the daily life of himself and family by a Grace at meals. It keeps all in mind that our life needs grace, and especially the grace of grateful dependence on the Almighty. The Jews asked a blessing on themselves at their meals. "Blessed art Thou, oh Lord our God, the king of the world, *that bringeth forth bread out of the earth.*" The last words were varied, according to the thing for which the blessing was asked. 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5. This was no ordinary meal. The secret meaning of the miracle was expounded by the Saviour. John vi. It was an acted parable. It typified the spiritual food of the Church universal. Says Bp. Porteus, "But it seems to have had a *spiritual* as well as a literal meaning; having refer-

multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven,[a] he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to *his* disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

20 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.[b]

21 And they that had eaten, were about five thousand men, beside women and children.

22 ¶ And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

a Ch. 15. 36.

b 1 Kings 17. 16; 2 Kings 4. 1–7.

ence to that *spiritual food*, that *celestial manna*, that *bread of life*, which our Lord was then dispensing in such abundance to those that hungered and thirsted after righteousness." He multiplied the loaves among so many thousands, without their losing, but rather gaining in substance, and in like manner He now manifests that no numbers of men, no extent of space can exhaust that communion with Him, which is the source of spiritual life. If it be right to believe that the life and miracles of Christ were meant to show us how in all ages He is still with men, to give them spiritual blessings, we have here a striking proof of the doctrine, that He gives *Himself*, the true manna, the spiritual bread from heaven, ever distributed, yet never failing.

20, 21. *Twelve baskets full.* The only explanation of this event is, that it was a miracle, of the manner of which we can hardly form any conception. The same power which created the worlds out of nothing, which increased the widow's cruise of oil, at the word of a Prophet, is here shown in increasing the substance of bread and fish, far beyond all natural powers. What before was held in the hand, after satisfying an immense crowd, cannot now be restored to its original compass. From the number of the baskets being twelve, it is surmised that they were such as could be commonly carried about to hold provision, and each belonged to a disciple; but they may have been any baskets brought with them in the boat. The people, astonished at such a proof of power and future success, plot to make Him king (John. vi. 15), which causes Jesus again to retire from them. Piety in the service of Christ is great gain, both now and hereafter, but it will not suffer men to follow Him only for a temporal support.

22, 23. *And straightway Jesus constrained, &c.* See Mark vi. 45–56; John vi. 15–21. The word *constrain* implies a degree of force, moral or otherwise. From its use it would seem that the disciples were disinclined to let slip this opportunity of keeping together the multitude, and were something unwilling to depart. Jesus *commanded* them therefore, with authority, to leave Him (Mark vi. 46) while He dismissed the crowd. If this idea is correct, then it may have been the subject of our Lord's prayer that the disciples should be kept from worldly temptation, and not suffered to leave Him as others did. The events of this night may be again an acted parable, intended to humble their ambition. Our Saviour retires into a mountain alone to pray—1, to escape the attention of the multitude and the confusion which had now been continued since the disciples of John came to Him: 2, to meditate on the death of John and His own, which would, before long, follow it: 3, to pray for the weak disciples and the multitude, that they might hunger more for the spiritual food, than for the bodily sustenance. It seems fitting that He should desire this time for lonely prayer, after

24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking[a] on the sea.

26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit;[b] and they cried out for fear.

27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out

a Job 9. 8.

b 1 Sam. 28. 8, 12, 15; Job 4. 15, 16; Wis. 2. 3.

such painful and exciting events. Jesus often worshipped in the liturgical forms of prayer in the temple and synagogues. He did not, as some vainly pretend, diminish aught of the respect for or necessity of public worship in set forms of prayer. And like Him we may use the one, yet find peculiar advantage in secret communion with the Father of spirits: find in it, a balm for past sorrows and grace for future trials. We may learn from this instance of Jesus leaving the multitudes who would honor Him in worldly wise, to shed a tear in solitude over His cousin, the son of Zacharias, that in secret prayer is to be found the best comfort and strength of the Christian.

24. *In the midst of the sea.* See note, ch. viii. 24. The storms of the sea of Galilee were very sudden and frightful. St. John says that they had sailed about twenty-five or thirty furlongs—three or four miles—or just into the centre of the sea, where the current of the Jordan caused the greatest commotion in a storm. A furlong was an eighth of a mile or about 200 yards.

25. *The fourth watch.* A watch is a period of the night spent by soldiers, in keeping awake, to guard against enemies, or to prevent the escape of prisoners. It means generally any division of the night. The Jews had, just before St. Matthew wrote his gospel, changed their own ancient custom of *three watches* of the night; the first (Lam. ii. 19), the *middle* (Judges vii. 19), and the morning watch (Ex. xiv. 24), for the Roman usage of four watches of three hours each. Mark xiii. 25. These watches began at six, nine, twelve, and three. It was after three in the morning that Jesus came to His disciples. Through the early dawn they saw Him walking on the sea. To walk upon the sea is a miracle, which teaches us that Christ was able to assume the attributes of God. See Job ix. 8.

26. *A spirit.* The Jews, as many other nations, believed in spiritual apparitions. 1 Sam. 28, 15. They supposed the spirit of a dead man, not as we now imagine pure spirit to be, of no form, color or matter, but "a soft or moist air" (Wisdom ii. 3), in form like the person, of a pale color, able to converse, but like air, not to be grasped. The sight of such shadows they always feared, as ominous of evil. The frightened disciples can give no other explanation of this miracle of Jesus walking on the waves, than that He is dead, and His spirit coming to them to announce the evil news.

27–29. *He walked on the water, &c.* Peter was a man of undoubted physical courage. He shows it now and when he attacked the crowd in Gethsemane. He was now beginning to see that there was a mystery about his Master, which he had not at first dreamed of, that "He was the Son of the living God." But how then does he fail in courage in both cases? Our answer must be grounded on the fact that he was not *regenerated*, i. e. born anew to spiritual strength and insight, until the day of Pentecost. And wanting that strength, he had only his natural cour-

of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

30 But when he saw the wind boisterous,‖ he was afraid; and beginning to [a]sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth *his* hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of [b]little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.[c]

33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son[d] of God.

34 ¶ And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret.

35 And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased;

36 And besought him that they

‖ or, *strong*. *a* Ps. 69. 12. *b* Jas. 1. 6. *c* Ps. 107. 29. *d* Dan. 3. 25; John 6. 69.

age and understanding to trust to, and the design of this scene, as of that of the denial, is to teach us that the best *natural gifts* of courage and intellect are insufficient without grace. That Peter had *some* faith and courage is certain, because he did walk on the waters, and a terrible feat it was—he did attack the rude mob which came to take his Master. That he had not the strength and insight afterwards granted to him in the new birth, is evident from his own first sermon, and all his epistles. The lesson which we should draw from his character as a *disciple*, is to distrust the highest and noblest natural gifts, courage, impetuosity, strong love, fidelity, &c.; and from his character as an *apostle* to see how sublime is the power of a man who forgets himself in the faith of his being "a partaker of the divine nature." 2 Pet. i. 4; 1 Pet. v. 6,7. Often he is called rash, headlong, cowardly and the like. But there is no mark of such a character in him—such an one would not have been so beloved. And if he were so cowardly, then we have no instance in the Gospels, well drawn out and applied, of the danger of depending on *native strength* in spiritual things, rather than on the Holy Spirit. As John was an example of natural affectionateness of disposition, so we consider Peter the instance of *native energy*. Both had the faults belonging to such characters. Both need the new birth at the Pentecost, to see where their true love and strength lay.

32. *The wind ceased.* St. John adds that they were immediately at the land whither they went. We have in this narration a collection of wonders, and may well ponder them to ask, why they were done, and what moral and spiritual lessons do they teach. They do not cease with the letter, or with their temporary effect on a few disciples, but admit of meanings which apply to spiritual things, in every age of the Church. But to develop these meanings, and bring forth out of the treasure of the Scripture things new and old, is the duty of the scribes well instructed, the Bishops and doctors of the Church. The private Christian may well apply himself to a prayerful study of the depth and riches of the Gospels, under their guidance.

33–36. *They that were in the ship.* The mariners and owners of the boat. They are amazed at His power, grateful for safety, and convinced, by the things they had seen, that Jesus is able to exercise the powers by which the Messias was to be known. We are not to suppose that they understood their own words in all their depth and fulness: for spiritual things must be spiritually discerned. They do certainly confess Jesus to be the Son of God, in the words of Daniel iii. 25. When our Saviour uses the words, and in the con-

might only touch the [a]hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.

a Num. 15. 38; Acts 19. 12; Jas. 5. 15.

CHAPTER XV.

THEN came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying,

fessions of faith after the descent of the Holy Ghost, they are to be taken in the full Christian sense. ¶ *Gennesaret.* They landed here instead of at Bethsaida. Gennesaret was the region on the west side of the sea, of which Capernaum was the chief town, and from which the lake was sometimes named. As soon as His coming was known in the neighboring villages, the sick are brought to Him to be healed. ¶ *Hem of his garment.* The fringe of His robe, which He wore as a Jew. Num. xv. 38. See note ch. ix. 20. "Nor ought we to fail to recognize the symbolic character which this whole transaction wears. As that bark was upon those stormy seas, such is oftentimes the Church. It seems as though it had not its Lord with it, such little way does it make; so baffled is it and tormented by the opposing storms of the world. But His eye is on it still; He is in the mountain apart praying; ever living, an ascended Saviour, to make intercession for His people. And when at length the time of urgent need has arrived, He is suddenly with it, and that in marvellous ways past finding out; and then all that before was so laborious is easy, and the toiling rowers are anon at the haven where they would be." *Trench.*

CHAPTER XV.

1. See also Mark vii. 1–9; John vii. 1. Our Saviour is supposed by the learned Harmonists (McKnight, Jarvis), to have gone up to Jerusalem to the Passover. Deut. xvi. 16. It was the third Passover in His ministry. The Pharisees, whose rage was increased by the accounts of the disciples who had fallen away from Him after the discourse related (John vi.), attempted His life; and either then or following Him to Galilee, renewed their attempts to make Him unpopular, by showing that He disregarded the traditions, which all held sacred. We come now to the *last year* of our Lord's life. At the next Passover, *His hour comes*, He lays down His life on the cross. ¶ *Scribes and Pharisees.* See notes, ch. ii. 4, and iii. 7.

2. *The tradition of the elders.* St. Mark says that "they saw some of the disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say with unwashen hands." Not that their hands were soiled with dirt, but with ceremonial defilement. In the Gospels, *a tradition* signifies a religious custom or precept, handed down from former generations, and held to be of equal sacredness with the written law. The *elders* were the learned men living in old times. These traditions were a very important part of the Jewish system. They were so often condemned, that we should impress on our minds exactly what it was in them that was condemned. The Pharisees taught that when Moses received the *written law*, he was instructed also in another law, which he was not to write down, but to deliver to the elders of the congregation. This oral law, they maintained, was the only authorized interpretation of the written law, so that a Jew could never be certain of the meaning of the latter, until he had inquired of the Pharisees the explanation of the former. They were therefore the only infallible interpreters of this oral law, and of course held an authority over the common people of a most dangerous kind; perverting the laws of God at their pleasure, by any explanations of their own, for which they had the impudence to claim tradition. The Sadduces opposed this doctrine, and held only to the law as written and explaining itself to the reason and conscience, although they seem to have leaned to the Samaritan error of denying the authorized interpretations of the inspired prophets. These traditions are supposed to have been recorded in a book called the Talmud: a book that contains most

2 Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

3 But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your [a]tradition?

4 For God commandeth saying, [b]Honour thy father and mother: and, [c]He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

5 But ye say, Whosoever shall say to *his* father or *his* mother, *It is* a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me;

a Col. 2. 8, 23; Tit. 1. 14. *b* Ex. 20. 12. *c* Ex. 21. 17; Lev. 20. 9.

valuable information of the ancient life and manners of the Jews. Our Lord condemned traditions, i. e. *any oral law, adding to, setting aside, or claiming superiority to the written law of Moses.* By just inference we conclude that the same error is condemned now, and we believe therefore, that "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."—*Art. VI.* We deny the Romish claim to tradition and infallible explanation of Scripture. Neither our Lord, nor the Church, condemn a just and proper reverence for the history of past opinions and testimonies of the good men of the Church, if held as subordinate to and throwing light on Scripture in *doubtful cases.* The New Testament has a written history, which in many cases explains the facts and customs recorded in it. The Church bids us often to refer to "Holy Scriptures and ancient authors." 1 Cor. xi. 2; 2 Thes. iii. 6. Jesus does not condemn a submission to the results of the sound reasonings, nor the testimonies of good men of the past, but, a "making the commandment of God *of none effect* through traditions." The particular tradition in this case, was founded on such precepts as Lev. xv. 11. In certain cases men were called unclean. If others *touched* them they were to "rinse their hands in water, wash their clothes and bathe themselves in water." This was meant to teach the Jews the uncleanness of sin. But this tradition lost sight of this spiritual end, and invented a tedious round of washings of pots, cups, brazen vessels and tables. Mark vii. 3, 4. When a Jew came to eat he must wash the arms to the elbow, lest by any chance he had touched any thing unclean, and so might swallow uncleanness with his food. This was *superstition.* Verse 11.

3. *Why do ye, &c.* He shows them that their system of tradition is false. This is a good mode of refuting error. The law of God is first to be held sacred, over all things else. Your traditions violate it, and are therefore false. The direct question made to the Pharisees is intended to convict them publicly for their wickedness. Their secret object was to prejudice the people against Him. Jesus afterwards prevents this by other arguments.

4. *For God, &c.* This commandment, fixed on the immutable principles of the natural conscience, and solemnly sealed by the voice of Jehovah from Sinai, could least of all be misunderstood. Ex. xx. 12. To ensure its obedience a promise is joined to it of long life, and a threat of certain death against wilful disobedience. Ex. xxi. 17; Lev. xx. 9. Superstition and infidelity meet by different ways in the desire to set aside the plain laws of God. ¶ *Curseth. To curse*, is the opposite of *to honor*, meaning to slight, speak evil of, and treat with disrespect. Ezek. xxii. 7. The heathen had laws to condemn those guilty of such crimes to death, and would have despised the traditions of the Pharisees as immoral. ¶ *Let him die the death.* The Hebrews from a want of adjectives and adverbs often repeated the verbs. They said let him dying die, or die by death, for let him

6 And honour not his father or his mother, *he shall be free.*[a] Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

7 *Ye* hypocrites, well did Esaias[b] prophesy of you, saying,

8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me.

9 But in vain do they worship

a Deut. 27. 16. *b* Is. 29. 13.

surely die. To honor parents requires one to make provision for them in sickness or old age. Prov. xxiii. 22. This the Pharisees had discouraged.

5, 6. *It is a gift*, or "It is corban." The word is probably quoted from some set phrase which was used on such occasions. Any thing solemnly set apart by a formal vow to the sacred uses of the service of God, and so not to be used by other persons was corban. But the subtlety of these traditionists had invented a secret reserve beneath this form of words. The Jew said to his parents, either in selfishness or anger, "It is corban, all that I can give to you." From that time he could not apply any of his property to the support of his parents, because, said the Pharisees, he broke a vow to God; but he was not bound nor expected to *actually devote* it to God. He was only bound by it *not to support his parents.* He might use it freely upon himself. In this manner the fifth commandment was set aside, and the vow to God, which was binding on them (Deut. xxiii. 21) was *mocked* by a prescribed form. If we had not other instances of this subtlety in the Pharisees and in the modern Jesuits, we would doubt the fact that men could be so deluded. No vow or oath can release a man from obedience to moral law. To give alms in the support of religion is a prescribed duty, but only of that which we can honestly call our own. A man has no right to give alms while his whole income is needed to maintain his family, or while he is in actual debt, and has no absolute right to that which he gives. 1 Tim. v. 8; Rom. xiii. 8.

7, 8. *Ye hypocrites.* See note ch. vi. 2. They hid a wicked and selfish avarice under a show of extreme conscientiousness. ¶ *Prophecy of you.* Isaiah was then prophesying of the future, and foretelling what God would do with the Jews, because they were, and would continue to be, lip-worshippers and hypocrites. The most wicked designs of men are conducted under the show of great piety. No set of men ever had the forms of religion more frequently in their lips than the Pharisees and Jesuits; none have ever furnished the world with such fearful examples of corruption and cruelty. The heart must be constantly guarded by prayer and self-examination, lest it delude us into substituting the form of godliness for the true, sincere love of the duties of piety. Isaiah does not condemn the drawing nigh unto God with the lips, that is, the regular, orderly and devout worship of Him, but he condemns those who do it insincerely, while the affections and honest intentions of the heart are not at the same time engaged. There cannot be public worship without forms. We must give them our honest affections to make them useful.

9. *In vain.* To no purpose. God who sees the heart, will not be propitiated, unless men worship him with pure and sincere hearts. Prov. xv. 8. John iv. 24. ¶ *Teaching for doctrines.* Teaching as doctrines necessary to salvation, in the same manner as the commands of God were necessary. He does not condemn the enforcing the commands and arrangements of men, as such, but teaching them as the laws of God. This error Protestants justly charge upon Romanists, in the matters treated of by the council of Trent. They make 'as necessary to salvation,' a belief of purgatory, the papacy, worship of images, the virgin, saints, &c. The Episcopal Church cannot be suspected of this error, as she practises according to the profession of the VIth Article.

me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments[a] of men.

10 ¶ And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand:

11 Not that which goeth[b] into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.

a Col. 2. 22.

12 Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended after they heard this saying?

13 But he answered and said, [c]Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

14 Let them alone: they be

b Acts 10. 15; Rom. 14. 14, 20; 1 Tim. 4. 4; John 15. 2, 6.

See note verse 2. She does teach us many commands of men, only as of human authority, and approved by reason, exactly as St. Paul did. 1 Cor. x. 25, 29; vii. 6, 12. She declares that of all matters which *are not doctrines or commandments of God* "the Church has power to decree rites and ceremonies, and authority in *controversies* of faith: and yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain any thing that is contrary to God's word written: neither may it so expound one place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to another. Wherefore, although the Church be a witness and a keeper of Holy Writ, yet as it ought not to decree any thing against the same, so *besides the same, ought it not to enforce any thing to be believed for necessity of salvation.*" *Art. XX.* In this article is found the best comment upon this verse, and by this sound principle, the Church is guided in all her rites and ceremonies.

10. *Hear and understand.* See Mark vii. 15–17. Observe and ponder this. Jesus now replies *directly* to the question of the Pharisees. As their design in questioning Him, was to excite the hatred of the people against Him, Jesus makes the answer to the people, to show the Pharisees, how easily their error could be rebuked, and their malice avoided. As much in error as the common people might be, He was not afraid to let them all hear and judge of His reply.

11. *Not that which goeth into the mouth.* Not food and drink. They do not defile the soul. Certain meats were forbidden in the Levitical law, to school the minds of the Jews, and prepare them for the spiritual law of Christ. But they grossly erred, and imagined that they could be spiritually debased by certain meats. Jesus asserts the broad principle, which human reason acknowledges as immutably true, that sin does not lie in food or matter, but in the soul. It is "the transgression of the law." 1 John iii. 4. ¶ *Defileth.* "Takes away that purity which you Pharisees think to keep by incessant washings." The word signifies to make common, unclean, as heathen men are; hence, to pollute spiritually. Acts xxi. 28.

12. *Were offended.* Were scandalized, and angry, at being exposed before the multitude. Their weapons had been turned against themselves.

13. *Every plant.* Some explain this of *every doctrine.* The Jews poetically called a doctrine a *seed* or *plant.* In this case our Saviour means, fear not their anger. However strong their prejudices are, this doctrine of theirs concerning the traditions of the elders will be overthrown. The truth shall prevail over all false opinions. You my disciples will see even this prejudice overcome. Others explain the word *plant* as a plantation of young trees, or nursery, referring it to the Pharisees, as a class. They would yet be rejected, and the Christian teachers prevail over them.

14. *Let them alone.* Pay no regard to their anger, nor fear the effects of it. They do it from the blindness of their minds, and, like blind men, will not injure us, but only themselves. From this we may learn, 1. Not to be deterred from doing our duty and speaking truth by the scandals and name-callings of

blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

15 Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable.

16 And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding?

17 Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?

18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

19 For out of the heart proceed evil[a] thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

a Gal. 5. 19, &c.; Eph. 2. 3; Tit. 3. 3.

perverse men. 2. That it is always the duty of men to compare the precepts of their teachers with the Scriptures. 3. That the Christian must be patient at the sight of the worldly power and success of unauthorized teachers. When God wills, their prejudices will be banished, or their power destroyed. ¶ *Blind leaders.* They did not see the true light, but refused it, from their violent prejudices. John ix. 40. No man would allow a blind man to be his guide in a path beset with precipices and pitfalls. How many Christian people suffer others to become their spiritual pastors and guides, without inquiry whether they are sent and authorized by the chief Bishop and Shepherd of souls, and are able to walk in the path of life for themselves. ¶ *Into the ditch.* Become filthy and ridiculous. From being scrupulous in trifles, they become wholly defiled in heart.

15. See also Mark vii. 17–20. *This parable.* The Hebrews had but one word for *parable* and *proverb.* The Evangelists at times used one for the other. In this place and in Luke iv. 23, v. 36, that which is properly a proverb, or short, pithy saying, is called a parable; while in John xvi. 25, 29, the word proverb is used for parable. There is no radical distinction in the words. It seemed obscure to the disciples that their reverend teachers could be called blind, their own eyes being but partly opened to the national errors. Acts x. 14. St. Mark says that *all the disciples* asked Him to explain, which, of course, St. Matthew has not denied. Peter may have asked for the rest, or before the rest did. One writer notices the one fact, the other records the other, while both are true.

16, 17. *Are ye also, &c.* Jesus had used plain words, but their prejudices made them obscure. Moses taught them that though God had, for good reasons, made a difference between certain animals, forbidding some to be eaten, yet that He had made sin to consist in transgression against His laws. The prophets had fully explained the same. Food could not defile the mind except as they broke the law in taking it. It was only tradition which erred. Had they received the spiritual sense of the Scriptures, they would have had understanding of the true doctrine.

18–20. *Out of the mouth, &c.* Our Lord speaks of the mouth, as it is the instrument of food and conversation, and as marking certain sins, as lying, blasphemy, &c. James iii. 6. ¶ *From the heart.* St. James (ch. i. 14, 15) gives the process of sinful deeds: 1. A man is drawn away of his own lust, i. e. evil passions, and *enticed*, i. e. taken captive by the sin and desires it. 2. When lust hath thus taken the bait or been enticed, it conceives, and as a serpent its egg, so in due time it bringeth forth *sin.* 3. And sin, when it is finished (τελειω), has run its course and come to full age, bringeth forth death. Thus every sin must begin in the lusts of a depraved heart. And this liability of the heart to conceive sin by its desires, is what is meant by original sin, which is "the fault and corruption of the nature of

20 These are *the things* which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

21 ¶ Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.

22 And behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, *thou* son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

23 But he answered her not a

every man, that naturally is engendered in the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit, and, therefore, in every person born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation." *Art. IX.* ¶ *Evil thoughts.* These are placed first, as if to represent the fountain from which the other sins proceed. It means evil cogitations, reasonings or purposes; that general deliberation before an evil deed, which St. James speaks of as "lust conceiving," and St. John as "hating one's brother." 1 Epis. iii. 15. The evil deeds which are mentioned here and in St. Mark's Gospel (vii. 21), are only a few instances of each kind. Dr. Whitby has noted that they are to be reduced to the violation of the commandments of the second table, as follows: Against the sixth commandment, as murder and the evil eye: seventh, as fornication, adultery, lasciviousness: eighth, as theft, deceit: ninth, as false testimonies, blasphemies, evil speaking: tenth, as covetousness. They are the violations of those duties so excellently summed up in the answer to the question in the Catechism, "What is thy duty towards thy neighbor?" This original sin, and these its bitter fruits brought down the Son of God, to prepare a way of cleansing the heart, that the life may be good. He does this in our regeneration, when He gives us those gifts of the Spirit which aid us in working out our salvation. Let us adore His grace that He was willing to save us from our own hearts, and to give us new hearts, wherewith to bring forth better fruit than these crimes. Gal. v. 22–25.

21. Mark vii. 24–30. Dr. Jarvis says, "The severity of His reply, and His warning to the people not to substitute outward for inward purity, gave them (the Pharisees) great offence, and alarm to His timid disciples. To avoid them our Lord left the dominions of Herod, and went into the region of Tyre and Sidon." ¶ *Tyre, &c.* See note ch. xi. 21. They were cities situated on the Mediterranean shore.

22. *A woman of Canaan, &c.* St. Mark calls her "a Greek, a Syrophœnician by nation." The two names were given to the same tract of country. It was originally called Canaan. The children of Israel drove out the nations who inhabited it. By a woman of Canaan, they meant one who was not a Jew. The Greeks under Alexander conquered the country, which they called Phœnicia near the sea, and more inland Syro-phœnicia. It is usual now to say Palestine or Syria. The important fact about the name is that she was a Gentile. The word Greek with St. Paul most commonly means Gentile. She was a pagan, i. e. was out of the covenant, and, as the Jews thought, had no right to receive any blessing from their prophets. She was what we are, and *the first* of the Gentiles to obtain a blessing by faith. ¶ *Coasts.* The country lying near the sea. ¶ *Thou Son of David.* She confesses Him to be the Messiah, a remarkable instance of faith in one not bound by the precepts, nor claiming the privileges of the Mosaic law. See note ch. ix. 27. ¶ *Is grievously vexed.* The demons seem to have exercised greater power for evil among the heathen. Ch. viii. 28, &c. See note iv. 24. Would that sinners could feel their *spiritual* need as this woman her daughter's trouble! St. Mark says that "she came and fell at

word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.

24 But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the [a]house of Israel.

25 Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.

26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast *it* to dogs.

27 And she said, [b]Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table.

28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great *is* thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

a Acts 3. 26.

b Job 13. 15.

His feet." Such earnestness is always successful. "In this confession of this woman we have *an abstract of divinity.* What can we Christians confess more than the deity, the humanity and the Messiahship of our glorious Saviour? His deity as Lord; His humanity as a Son; His Messiahship as the Son of David."—*Bp. Hall.*

23. *But he answered her not a word.* For two plain reasons: 1st. To try her faith before others. He saw her good faith and develops it, to make the blessing more remarkable. 2d. This, as Bp. Horsley remarks, "was the *first instance* in which our Lord's aid had been invoked by a person neither by birth an Israelite nor by profession a worshipper of the God of Israel. The miracle which He was presently to work for her was to be an action of no small importance; *being a prelude to the disclosure* of the great mystery, that through Him the gate of mercy was *opened to the Gentiles.* It was fit therefore that she should be put to some previous trial of her faith, and show herself in some sort worthy of so high a preference."

24. *But unto the lost sheep, &c.* The Jews. He was sent to them, was born among them, lived with them, and died by their hands. He came to save all finally, and this act, as said above, is a *prelude* to that great work of saving the Gentiles.

25. *Lord, help me.* There is an exquisite beauty in the brevity of her prayer. She urges no argument, perhaps her voice is choked by her tears, she looks in the Saviour's face and sees the mercy that disproves His words, and she says only—help me! The soul that bows as she did, need say no more. ¶ *Worshipped.* See note ch. viii. 2.

26. *But he answered, &c.* Our Lord farther proves her. The Jews considered themselves as the peculiar favorites of heaven, and despised others. Jesus to call out her confession, speaks as if He felt as the other Jews, that she was too far inferior to Him, to receive such a blessing. The same principle is recognized in Is. liv. 7, 8. "For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies I will gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer."

27. *And she said, &c.* The remarkable humility of this woman, may well put us to shame. Be it so, Lord, my Master. Give the Jews, the children, what you will—but give me this mercy. Out of thine abundance it is only as a crumb, which the children drop and neglect. They cannot be the poorer. Who will falter, when Jesus shows us by this how He would have us "always to pray and not to faint."

28. *Be it unto thee, &c.* We rejoice at the trial to which she had been put, when we see the result. Had she gone away discouraged—had she been gratified at the first cry, we had lost the

29 And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there.

30 And great multitudes came unto him, having with them *those that were* lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them:[a]

31 Insomuch that the multitude wondered when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel.

32 ¶ Then Jesus called his disciples *unto him*, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

33 And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?

34 And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes.

35 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground.

36 And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks,[b] and brake *them*, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

37 And they did all eat, and were filled; and they took up of the broken *meat* that was left seven baskets full.

a Is. 35. 5, 6.

b 1 Sam. 9. 13; Lu. 22. 19.

force and consolation of her story. Now it is plain of what kind that "great faith" is which can have all things *as it will:* which is omnipotent with Him, who is omnipotent to save. Says Dean Stanhope, "In like manner does our heavenly Father deal with His children on all occasions. He tries those tempers by suspending His mercies, which indulgence or readiness to give are apt to spoil. He makes us feel our dependence, and trains us up to patience and resignation, to trust and constancy: for indeed we are not worthy to receive, till we are perfectly satisfied that He is the properest Judge *when*, as well as *how* and *what* to give; and that in all these regards, He proceeds upon reasons, not only wise in themselves, but beneficial to us."

29–31. *The sea of Galilee.* He went through the region of Decapolis on the east side of the sea, the province of Herod Philip, as if He still hesitated about exposing Himself to His enemies in Capernaum. The people of this province take advantage of His visit, to bring to Him all their sick. See note, ch. iv. 24. ¶ *Maimed.* Crippled in a limb, as a leg or arm. Acts iii. 2. ¶ *Glorified the God of Israel.* The people beyond Jordan, being many of them Jews, had fallen into great errors. But led by such prodigies, they do honor to the God in whose name they were done.

32. *And have nothing to eat.* It is not necessary from the words above, to suppose that the multitude had fasted three days, but had been with Jesus three days, and having exhausted all their supplies, were now suffering hunger. See Mark viii. 1–10. The only difference between this miracle and that recorded ch. xiv. 14–21, is in the multitude. The place was the same, the plain near the mount of Beatitudes, close to the sea; the cause of it the same; the manner the same. The persons receiving support in this miraculous manner are not the same. Before they had come from the western shore. Now from the east

38 And they that did eat were four thousand men beside women and children.

39 And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and, tempting, desired him that he would shew them a [a]sign from heaven.

2 He answered and said unto

a Ch. 12. 38, &c.

or the region of Decapolis. Are we to understand that these latter were Gentiles? If so, the spiritual lessons of the miracle are read to them, and another intimation is given to the disciples of the future admission of the Gentiles into the Church. It may be that the disciples asked the question they did because the multitude were Gentiles.

39. *Coasts of Magdala.* St. Mark says *of Dalmanutha.* The town may have had both names, as the sea was called by three titles, Tiberias, Gennesaret and Galilee: or they may have been neighboring villages. The Evangelists both say the coasts, or parts of these places, that is, the neighborhood which may have been common to both. Magdala, says Dr. Robinson, was "a place on the western shore of the lake of Gennesaret, south of Capernaum, and a few miles north of Tiberias. Seetzen and Burckhardt found here a miserable village still called *El Madgdel.*"

This chapter, verses 21–28, furnishes the Holy Gospel for the second Sunday in Lent. The Collect is suited to it. "Almighty God, who seest that *we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves;* keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls; that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul, though Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen."

CHAPTER XVI.

1. See Mark viii. 11. 12. The *Pharisees, Sadducees.* See note, ch. iii. 7. These two sects were opposed and hostile, but now, in their combined hate to Jesus, they begin to conspire together. The former seem to have grown desperate, and now make a powerful attack on the claims of the Saviour, to destroy, if possible, His reputation with the common people. They came from Jerusalem to Galilee for this purpose. ¶ *Tempting.* The word means to seduce with evil motive into sin or folly. They did not really wish to see a sign from heaven, that they might believe in Him, or have others do it; but either they wished Him to fail, or they hoped to prove to the multitude that, not showing such a sign, He was not the Messiah of the prophets. They seemed to do him honor; they wished to injure Him. ¶ *Sign from heaven.* See note, ch. xii. 38. This sign from heaven, they argued, would prove him to be a prophet, and the Messiah, according to Dan. viii. 13. Prophets had shown signs from the sky; Moses, manna; Samuel, thunder; Isaiah, a change of the dial. Ex. xvi. 4; John vi. 31; 1 Sam. xii. 16–18; Isa. xxxviii. 8. Jesus had more than equalled those prophets, so that they had already sufficient signs. At His Baptism the heavens were opened with signs. He gave them miraculous bread to eat, after blessing it from heaven. The sign spoken of in Daniel, of the "clouds of glory," is to attend the future coming of the Messiah.

2, 3. *The signs of the times.* The various indications, that ancient prophecies were then fulfilled. Gen. xlix. 10; Is. ix. 1; xxxv. 5; Dan. xii. 24. They could foretell the weather by the clouds and indications peculiar to their climate, and by the very same sign of redness in the sky, at one time say it would be fair, again foul weather. Yet they insisted in the face of all other proofs on the actual coming from the skies. This wish of theirs was insulting, for it argued that He could not be the Messiah. For Daniel said he was to come in the clouds of heaven, but Jesus had already come in another way. The loss of their royal line, and their conquest by Ro-

them, When it is evening, ye say, *It will be* fair weather: for the sky is red.

3 And in the morning, *It will be* foul weather to-day: for the sky is red and lowering. O *ye* hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not *discern* the signs of the times?

4 A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas.[a] And he left them, and departed.

a Jonah 1. 17.

5 And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread.

6 ¶ Then Jesus said unto them, [b]Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

7 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* because we have taken no bread.

8 *Which* when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?

b Lu. 12. 1.

mans, the times fixed by Daniel, the miracles He was doing, all were signs of the times of the Messiah, by which they could have discovered Him.

4. *There shall no sign, &c.* See notes, ch. xii. 38–40. St. Mark says *that He sighed deeply in spirit.* Mark. viii. 12. He was grieved by their hardness of heart, and the certainty of their eternal ruin. The words of this verse, in Greek, partake of the nature of an oath. It is a sentence of reprobation against them; as is shown too in the fact that Jesus no more remonstrates with them nor reproves them, but leaves them to themselves.

5. *To the other side.* To the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, to the town of Bethsaida. This conversation happened in the ship as they were sailing, for they had but *one loaf.* St. Mark. viii. 14–21. St. Matthew's words in the Greek have this same meaning, "they coming," &c., that is, while they were on the way. The circumstance, in a ship where they could get no other supply, till they landed, is striking, and He seizes it to teach them an important lesson.

6–8. *Leaven.* The doctrines of the Pharisees. See note chap. xiii, 33. Leaven insinuates itself through the whole mass of dough into which it is put, and gives its character to all. So the evil principle of the Pharisees, their false, wicked temper, had changed and corrupted the very truths of God. The disciples must beware of them and their *doctrine*, that is, their teaching. It seems strange to us that the disciples should have misunderstood this, and imagined that Jesus spake of a want of bread. For we cannot perceive how the Pharisees and Sadducees could in any way be connected with the fact of their forgetting bread. And if we regard the disciples as at this very time all that we mean now by Christians, that is, spiritually-minded men, a dreamy mode of looking on them which has become common, we shall have great difficulty in accounting for such blindness. But if we bear in mind that the great era and turning point of their lives, after their obedience to the call of Jesus, was the Pentecost, when they were regenerated by the Holy Ghost and became Christians, we shall feel no trouble at seeing them stumble at the spiritual doctrines of Christ in these years of preparatory teaching. Their call was their conversion. Their discipleship, their preparation and discipline. Their baptism by fire (as ours by water) was their spiritual regeneration. They could not understand Jesus, simple as His words seem to us. They reverenced their Jewish guides too highly and thought them above blame. They were yet *of little faith.* They could not see how far the nation

9 Do ye not yet understand neither remember[a] the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?

10 Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?

11 How is it that ye do not understand that I spake *it* not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?

12 Then understood they how that he bade *them* not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

13 ¶ When Jesus came into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?

a Ch. 14. 19.

had departed from truth and righteousness, and so supposed, for want of a better meaning, that the Master was bidding them, in this singular manner, to be more provident in their journeys.

9–12. *Then understood they, &c.* They reflected that as He had transformed five loaves and seven loaves into the substance of hundreds, so he could as easily change their one loaf into enough to supply their wants. The inference was then inevitable that He had condemned the false teaching of their rulers. ¶ *Doctrine.* The spirit of their teaching. Luke xii. 1. The word means the body of instruction or discipline, rather than any one doctrine. The system of instruction taught by Jesus is called His *doctrine*, and again *the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship.* The word (διδαχη) is used only once in the plural in the translation, and then improperly, for the Greek is singular. Doctrines (Matt. xv. 9) are the opinions taught on special subjects; *doctrine*, is the whole system and body of divinity in its completeness. This system of the Pharisees was corrupt in the mass; like leaven, it puffed up the heart and soured it.

13. See Mark viii. 27–29; Luke ix. 18–20. *Cæsarea Philippi.* The Cæsarea of Philip, to distinguish it from the Cæsarea of Herod the Great, south of Mount Carmel, on the Mediterranean shore, near Joppa, about seventy-five miles from Jerusalem, and named after Cæsar Augustus. Acts ix. 40; x. 1. Cæsarea Philippi was in Galilee, at the foot of Mount Hermon, near the sources of the Jordan, and in the district of the tribe of Naphtali. Its ancient name was *Paneas*, and more anciently still *Laish* or *Leshem.* Judges xviii. 29. It was rebuilt and enlarged by Herod Philip, as the seat of his court, and called by him after Tiberius. His own name was sometimes added to mark it. It retains its original name. "We arrived at *Baniass* or *Panaass*, the ancient Cæsarea Philippi. It is a hamlet of twenty miserable huts, inhabited by Mahometans. The circuit of the ancient walls is easily distinguishable."—*Seetzen.* It is near the cave from which the river Jordan issues, fifteen miles from the little lake Phiala, the true source of that river. ¶ *Coasts.* Parts, "the towns" in that neighborhood. Mark viii. 27. It is common in the English translation to find *came*, and such words, in place of the Greek indefinite participle *coming.* We must bear this in mind, as the time is in such cases indefinite, meaning as He was journeying to a place. He was now on the eastern bank of the Jordan and in the neighborhood of Cæsarea. The time of the year is reckoned to be the middle of May. True era 33. He draws from His disciples by this question a confession of faith, which seems to have been necessary that He might begin to instruct them in the more difficult doctrines of His mission, namely His death and resurection. They were at the time alone, and our Lord had been engaged in prayer. Luke ix. 18.

14. *John the Baptist.* See note ch.

14 And they said, Some *say that thou art* John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the[a] Son of the living God.

17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for [b]flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my [c]Father which is in heaven.

18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will [d]build my church:

a Ps. 2. 7; Dan. 7. 13; Ch. 14. 33. *b* Gal. 1. 16. *c* 1 John 5. 20. *d* Eph. 2. 20; Rev. 21, 14.

xiv. 2. *Elias.* See note ch. xi. 14. *Jeremias or one of the prophets.* Jeremias is mentioned, because it was an opinion with some, that the Messiah would come "not from the living but from the dead" —and because of the high character given of him by the Lord Jehovah. Jeremiah i. 5, 10. The Jews considered him as chief of the prophets.

16. *And Simon Peter answered.* We have the good and the dark side of St. Peter's character, in this chapter. Eager courage and love lead him to catch a glimpse of truth; he utters it freely: the same qualities, not yet enlightened by the Holy Spirit, lead him to reject as openly the idea of the humiliation of the Messiah, verse 22. He is here praised and there blamed. The virtues and faults of such hearts as his are alike noticeable. Gal. ii. 8, 11. ¶ *The Christ.* See note ch. i. 1. He yet understood little of the true character and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Acts i. 6. He thinks Him a glorious earthly king, in whose peaceful reign the world would become a Paradise. Is. xi. 4–9. ¶ *The Son of the living God.* The promised Son of God. That the Divinity of Christ was shadowed out in the Old Testament, and believed by the Jews, is proved clearly by divines. Bp. Bull has arrayed authorities from the primitive ages for it, in his "Defence of the Nicene faith." See Is. ix. 6. The Jews called God *living*, to distinguish Him from the dead idols of the heathen. See note chap. i. 18.

17. *Simon Bar-jona.* The word *Bar* is the Syriac for the Hebrew *Ben*, both meaning *the son of.* Jonas was the father of Peter. ¶ *For flesh and blood.* This phrase means in the New Testament simply *men.* Gal. i. 16; Eph. vi. 12; Heb. ii. 14. Men have not taught you this truth. They differed about Jesus, and would not believe in Him as their king. The disciples had not been swayed by these prejudices to reject Him, but by obedience and fidelity to Him, had seen His miracles, heard His teachings, and gradually arrived at this conclusion, by the grace which always attends obedience. God had revealed this knowledge to them, not by any unusual or extraordinary communication, as at Pentecost, nor by any partial or arbitrary favor to them, but as a result of their obedience and love. In building an arch, the architect first places a temporary scaffolding until the semicircle is finished by the setting of the central keystone. If we imagine the workmen laboring in the dark, and with the setting of the keystone the light flashes over the whole, we may have an illustration of the experience of these disciples. The arch of divine truth was supported in them as yet by their *implicit* obedience. They begin dimly to perceive it, as Jesus speaks to them of doctrine: but only with the perfection of the work, the descent of the Spirit in a Baptism of fire, does the central truth of regeneration fall into its place, and the whole arch appear in harmony and light. Implicit obedience is often the means of our insight into truth, to which as a reward, God reveals spiritual knowledge. Ch. xi. 25.

18. *Thou art Peter.* The name Peter means a *stone.* John i. 42. "Thou

hast confessed Me by a name which declares My power. I invest you in return with one showing your character and mission, in carrying forward the effects of My work. Be a rock; firm, immovable, to fix the earliest preaching of the Gospel in the clearest terms, on facts and reasonings which its enemies cannot gainsay nor hide." Peter was of a firm and bold character that fitted him to affect vitally the first preaching of the Gospel. His energy helped to mould the first growths of it, in the form of stern, simple, unyielding *reasonings on facts*. In the first persecutions he was the rock on which the rage of the Jews spent itself. Acts iv. 8–10; xii 3, 5. His inflexible courage defended the flock, in the first absence of the chief Shepherd. Afterwards his importance was diminished by the rank of James as Bishop of the Holy City (Acts xv. 13), and the superior importance of the mission of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles. Gal. ii. 8. ¶ *Upon this rock.* The word is feminine and refers to the *faith* which Peter had professed. The Saviour would otherwise have said *upon thee* will I build My church. On the profession of *that faith, as professed by Peter*, the Church was to be built. Some explain the word *rock* as referring solely to the disciple, others to his faith. It seems better to admit that which is true in each—*a true faith* of the Son of God and a *firm, clear profession* of it by *living, acting*, energetic hearts. 1. The Church is founded on that faith in the divinity of Christ. She has professed it in every age, without it she would fall. She offers atonement, resurrection, heaven, by it alone. 1 John v. 20. 2. The foundation of the Church is a firm *individual expression* of the faith. The Church began in the *life* of Christ, unlike Judaism, which began in the "tables of stone and books of the law." 2 Cor. iii. 3; 1 Cor. xv. 1–12. The visible Church, its Scriptures, laws, customs, all grow out of this real life. The one Individual life which was the foundation is Christ, on whom were laid the Apostles, in equal rank. Gal. ii. 9; Eph. ii. 20; Rev. xxi. 14. Of these Apostles, Peter was signally honored. He was the first to preach to the Jews (Acts ii. 14–16), and to admit the Gentiles. Acts x. In both cases he laid the ground of faith in Jesus as the Son of God, and began the life of the Church. The Romish doctrine of the infallibility of the Romish See, depends upon a tissue of falsehoods and forged papers. It depends on a doubtful tradition, namely, that Peter was the first Bishop of Rome, and wants all shadow of evidence that, had he ever been there, he was to have an infallible successor. The Apostles had every power which St. Peter could claim (ch. xviii. 18; John xx. 22, 23), though the same honor in their one equal rank they may not have had. St. James and the other Apostles knew no such authority in Peter. Acts. xv. St. Paul paid it very little respect. Gal. ii. 11. The language here is figurative language, and is not to be pressed to unreasonable lengths. Says Bp. Horsley, "The Church to which our Lord here promises stability, and a final conquest over the power of the grave, is the building raised by Himself as the master-builder; that is, by persons commissioned by Him, acting under His directions, and assisted by His Spirit, on the solid rock of the truth of *St. Peter's faith*. That faith was a faith in the mediatorial offices of Christ, in His Divinity, and in the mystery of the Incarnation. Whatever be raised by man upon any other foundation, however it may assume the name of a Church, is no part of Christ's building and has no interest in these glorious promises." Says *Dr. Barrow*, the Apostles may also be termed foundations, "for that upon their testimonies concerning the life, death and resurrection of Christ, the faith of Christians was grounded; as also it stands upon their convincing discourses, their holy practice, their miraculous performances, in all which, St. Peter was most eminent, and in the beginning of Christianity displayed them to the edification of the Church." ¶ *My church.* The word church means an *assembly* or *congregation*. It is here used for the first time. The Septua-

and the[a] gates of ‖hell shall not prevail against it.

19 And I will give unto thee the[b] keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.

20 Then charged he his dis-

a Ps. 9. 13; Is. 54. 17. ‖ or, *Hades.*

b Is. 22. 22; Rev. 3. 7.

gint uses this Greek word in Deut. xviii. 16, for the Jewish Church. It is used in the New Testament, 1. Of the whole body of Christian believers, living and dead. Eph. iii. 10. 2. Of the society known and visible in the world (Eph. v. 23), now called the Church Catholic. 3. Of that body which will at last be saved. Heb. xii. 23. 4. Of particular churches, as the church at Corinth. 1 Cor. i. 2; xvi. 19, &c. It signifies at present that body which holds to the Apostles' *doctrine and fellowship*, being united to them by uninterrupted succession of faith and *life*, according to the promise that the succession should never be broken. "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly administered, according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same."—*Art. XIX.* And of the Church as a fellowship, or organic perpetual body: "It is evident unto all men, diligently reading Holy Scripture and ancient authors, that *from the Apostles' time*, there have been three Orders of ministers in Christ's Church—Bishops, Priests and Deacons." ¶ *The gates of hell.* Cities were anciently surrounded by walls with gates. These gates were often assaulted in battle, and were guarded by special garrisons. The word *gates* is used here for *powers*. Hell is Hades, the place of departed spirits. The powers of Hades, or the grave, is equivalent to David's expression, "the gates of death." Ps. ix. 13. The Church will never fail, though generation after generation yields to the power of death. There shall always be found the signs of a true Church.

19. *Unto thee.* This same power was given to all the Apostles; ch. xviii. 18. He could claim no rank above the other disciples, though the actual admission of Jews and Gentiles was intrusted to him. But after he had opened the door, he claimed no authority over the rest of his brethren. ¶ *The keys of the kingdom of heaven.* The Church. ¶ *The keys.* This is a metaphor, the meaning of which is very plain from Is. xxii. 22, and Rev. iii. 7; though the custom from which it is taken seems doubtful. It occurs also, Luke xi. 52; Rev. i. 18; ix. 1; xx. 1. In all which places he who bears the keys is the one who has power over the subjects assigned to him. And it is understood universally by learned men to signify the same here: they who have the power and authority of governing the Church, subject to the superior power of Christ. Jesus is dealing with them as *representatives.* This is plain from the promise which He makes of the perpetual endurance of the Church, as in ch. xxviii. 19, 20. This power was not to cease. Says Dr. Barrow, "What our Lord did intend to bestow on all pastors, *that* He did anticipately promise to him (Peter): or, as the Fathers say, to the Church and its pastors in him. All we Bishops (saith St. Ambrose) have in St. Peter received the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven." So in the solemn form of Ordination of Priests by the Church now, as in all ages, the equivalent words (John xx. 22, 23) are used in conveying the office of the ministry. "Whatsoever thou shalt bind, &c." Whatsoever, refers to Church laws, ceremonies, rites, discipline, censures, &c., by which the Church is edified and governed. To *bind* and *loose*, mean to declare lawful or unlawful, to prohibit, to allow, to compel obedience and relax censure, in a word all the rights and powers necessary for the right government of the Church. This ministerial power, guided at first by the inspiration of the Holy

ciples that they should tell no[a] man that he was Jesus the Christ.

21 ¶ From[b] that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.

a Mark 8. 30.

b Lu. 9. 22; 18. 31.

Ghost, was exercised by Peter and the other Apostles: since then, by the ministers of Apostolic succession, in *strict subjection* to the laws of Scripture, and the canons of the Church. The Apostles founded and organized the Church, and left to it the body of Christian faith and practice. Ministers now can only follow the laws and regulations laid down by them, and the canons of the branch of the Church to which they belong. They are not inventors nor lords, but servants and ministers, to apply the rules of inspiration to particular cases, to preach "the faith once for all delivered;" to administer the sacraments and ceremonies prescribed, and to govern according to law the flocks intrusted to their charge.

20. *Then charged He, &c.* He *strictly forbade* it, for two reasons; 1. It would endanger His life. He avoided publicity except when duty demanded it. He was not to be crucified, except at a Passover. If His disciples had begun to preach this faith in Him as Messiah, it would have brought them into danger prematurely. 2. The disciples were very unfit to preach this doctrine. They knew not yet *what* rising from the dead should mean; they knew nothing of His dying for sin, and of spiritual regeneration by the Holy Ghost. They would have preached of Him as a temporal king. See note, ch. viii. 4. This confession "forms *an epoch* in the history of our Saviour's ministry; because from henceforth that truth which had been before but obscurely intimated, became the leading, may I not say, the all absorbing subject of His doctrine." *Dr. Jarvis.*

21. *From that time forth.* After their confession that He was the Son of God. Says Bp. Horsley, "He did not think proper to disclose to them His approaching death till their faith had attained some degree of constancy and firmness. But when once it appeared that they not only esteemed and loved their Master as a wise and virtuous man; that they not only revered Him as an inspired teacher of righteousness, but that they believed in Him as the Christ, the Son of God, the Redeemer of Israel; it then became reasonable to remove their prejudices, to extinguish their hopes of sharing in the splendor of an earthly kingdom, and to prepare and fortify their minds against all that contradiction of sinners which they with their Master were in this world to endure." ¶ *Elders, &c.* The Sanhedrim or great Council of the Jews. See note, ch. v. 22.

22. *Peter took him.* The word *took* manifests St. Peter's impatience at such opinions, and his affection. He took Him by the hand or aside, and expostulated with Him. This same impatience and mistake led him to deny his Master. He seems to have thought these prophecies of death a strange language in Jesus, uttered either to try the fidelity of His followers, or from some natural fear or melancholy. It was this love which made him pledge to his Master that he was ready to embark his all in the war against the Pharisees and die with Him. It was this affection, and human, unsanctified courage, which made it impossible for Peter to understand that Jesus did not speak in melancholy, but in sober fact. *For willing ignominy* He was not prepared. ¶ *Be it far from thee.* Often used in the Old Testament, implying a prayer against an evil. Gen. xviii. 25.

23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, [c]Satan; thou art an [c]offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

24 ¶ Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and[d] take up his cross, and follow me.

25 For [d]whosoever will save his life, shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it.

26 For what is a man profited,

a 2 Sam. 19. 22. *b* Rom. 14. 13. *c* Ch. 10. 38; Acts 14. 22. *d* John 12. 25.

23. *Get thee behind me, Satan.* The word Satan is from the Hebrew, and means an *adversary*, an offence or impediment, or more softly, an *opposer*. It is, for his bad prominence in evil, appropriated to the devil. David used it as here, in strong remonstrance against certain of his zealous friends. 2 Sam. xix. 22. Jesus does not call Peter a devil, or an evil-minded tempter, but simply rebukes his zeal, which, by the very affection it showed for Him, made it harder for Him to walk the fearful path to the cross. A sad smile might have marked His sense of Peter's affection at the same time that the words rebuked his worldly pride. ¶ *Thou art an offence.* A stumbling block. "By urging me in this manner you are doing you know not what. I came to die for the sins of the world, and you, for a dream of temporal glory, would prevent me." ¶ *Thou savorest not.* You are acting and feeling now as men do, not as God wills. The word savor is emphatic. Peter was really hardly knowing what he was doing. He was deeply agitated, and his words gush out of a zealous, loving heart, almost without thought. The promise had elated him. He forgets himself and rebukes his Lord, and is immediately humbled.

24. See Mark viii. 24–38; Luke ix. 23–27. *Let him deny himself.* "The self-denial which our Saviour claims from His disciples is nothing more than a *willingness* to part with all earthly comforts and conveniences, to quit all our temporal interests and enjoyments, and even life itself, for the sake of Him and His religion."—*Archbp. Tillotson.* "The precept directs every one to take up *his* cross; not the trouble of another man, but that which is sent for his own trial, and adapted to his own case."—*Jones of Nayland.* No one is to make trouble for himself, or repine at blessings because he cannot feel the cross. In prosperity let him be humble and willing to submit, praying for strength when the day of trial comes, and the cross lays before his path,—some real, actual trouble, which must be taken up and borne with patience, perhaps till the end of life. See note ch. x. 38.

25. See note, ch. x. 39.

26. *For what, &c.* What profit will it be to you, my disciples, to have all your earthly dreams fulfilled, if it must be done without conviction of sin and of the need of a Saviour; and you cannot have a Saviour until I have offered the sacrifice, which I came to offer? What is a temporal kingdom, even of the whole earth, compared in value to a single soul? These are the considerations by which Jesus presses the opposite view from theirs, i. e. the things that savor of God. And truly they apply to all hearts, from those twelve men, gasping after the glorious visions of the letter of the Messianic prophecies, of gaining the whole world in the cause of a Prince, armed with such tremendous powers over men and nature as their Master had shown; down to us, who often sacrifice a soul for the mere dust and clods of the earth. It is a question of incalculable importance. It makes the heart quake to ask it. To lose the soul is to be driven away from God and heaven, light, purity, peace and all good, and to suffer "shame and everlasting contempt" in the indescribable

if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in [a]exchange for his soul?

27 For the Son of man [b]shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.[c]

28 Verily I say unto you, There be some standing [d]here, which shall not [e]taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

a Ps. 49. 7, 8. *b* Dan. 7. 9, 10; Zech. 14. 5; Jude 14. *c* Rev. 22. 12. *d* Mark 9. 1. *e* Heb. 2. 9.

miseries of the second death. "From Thy wrath and from everlasting damnation, good Lord, deliver us."

27. *In the glory of his Father.* The same is called the glory of Christ (ch. xxv. 31), and of both in common. John xvii. 5. He would at His second advent give the sign from heaven—asked so often by the Pharisees,—and then glorify the disciples to a state of joy as yet inconceivable. Thus Jesus sought to turn their eyes from earth to heaven, and give them glimpses, as they could bear it, of the glorious doctrines now so familiar to us. We should ponder upon this language till it makes us solemn in view of that coming judgment, when we are to expect the reward of our works. The mercy of Christ must be our *only plea then.* His righteousness must be *our model now.* Whatever cross He may put on us, let us bear it patiently, for the time is short; the reward will be for eternity.

28. *Verily I say, &c.* The coming of the Son of man (see notes, ch. xxiv) in the overthrow of Jerusalem. St. John, one of the twelve, survived that event as we know, and perhaps others. See John xxi. 22, 23. ¶ *Taste of death.* A metaphor, implying the bitterness and pains of death. ¶ *Son of man coming in his kingdom.* St. Mark says, "until they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." ix. 1. St. Luke again, "Till they see the kingdom of God." ix. 27. Our Lord foretold the terrific punishment of the Jews in the fall of Jerusalem, as *His coming.* The other two Evangelists, writing from what they had heard, give the *force of the words,* as they were believed by the Apostles, not as a bodily coming of Christ, but a manifestation of His power in destroying the kingdom of the Jews, to make room in the world for His Church. Dr. Whitby explains it thus: "the Messiah affording an *earnest of His intended future punishment,* by the severe punishment He will execute on the unbelieving and disobedient Jews of His age." "The evident tendency of our Saviour's words, in the latter part of this chapter, was to prepare the minds of His disciples for the cruel treatment which both He and they were to undergo, and at the same time to raise their drooping spirits, by setting before their eyes His own exaltation, and their glorious rewards in another life."—*Bp. Porteus.* Verses 13–19 form the Holy Gospel for St. Peter's day, June 29th. "O Almighty God, who by Thy Son Jesus Christ didst give to Thy Apostle St. Peter many excellent gifts, and commandest him earnestly to feed Thy flock; make, we beseech Thee, all bishops and pastors diligently to preach Thy holy word, and the people obediently to follow the same, that they may receive the crown of everlasting glory through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

CHAPTER XVII.

1. *And after six days.* See Mark ix. 2–10; Luke ix. 28–36. St. Luke says, "*about* eight days," that is, after the conversation recorded in the last chapter. According to the Jewish mode of reckoning, by counting first and last days, six whole days intervening, St. Luke's words may be naturally reconciled to those of St. Matthew. Dr. Jarvis says: "On Thursday the 22d of May, eight days from Thursday 15th of May, or six days, excluding the two extremes, ten days before Pentecost, and,

CHAPTER XVII.

AND after six days, Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,

2 And was transfigured[a] before

a Rev. 1. 16.

therefore, forty days from the morrow after the Sabbath of the first fruits, occurred the TRANSFIGURATION, exactly one year before our Lord's ASCENSION." ¶ *Peter, James and John.* These three were afterwards taken apart to witness the solemn scenes of the Garden of Gethsemane. Mark xiv. 33. "They were men of such commanding character, that their testimony, after our Lord's death and resurrection, would be sufficient to convince the great body of His disciples."—*Dr. Jarvis.* Their natural characters also *needed* particular instruction and humbling, in view of the great doctrine of the *sufferings* of Jesus. ¶ *Into a high mountain apart.* St. Luke adds that He went thither to *pray.* The first part of the time was so spent by Him, while the disciples slept. The spot selected has always been believed to have been *Mount Tabor,* situated in the province of Zebulon, mentioned Judges iv. 14. "This is a high mountain, round and beautiful, standing by itself in the plain of Esdraelon, at a short distance from Nazareth, towards the east. It has a plain area at the top of an oval figure, fertile and delicious, extended about two furlongs in length and one in breadth. It is enclosed with trees on all parts except the south. There are on it several cisterns of good water; also three continuous grottos, made to represent the three tabernacles, which St. Peter proposed to erect when astonished at the glory of the Transfiguration."—*Maundrell.* The walls and grottos this traveller speaks of are the ruins of an ancient monastery and church, dedicated to Jesus and his two attendants, Moses and Elias. This mountain was called from 2 Pet. i. 18, Age Mons, *the holy mountain.* Mountains have been chosen by Jehovah as the scene of His most glorious revelations.

2. *And was transfigured before them.* The word *transfigured* is used four times in the New Testament. Mk. ix. 2; Rom. xii. 2; 2 Cor. iii. 18. "Be ye *transformed* by the renewing of your mind." "We all are *changed* with the same image from glory to glory." It must signify more than a *change of form.* Jesus did not ascend up to this place to be changed in *appearance* only, but to manifest, by a radical change for the time being, His glory. "Thus, for a little while, during His state of humiliation, the Son of God permitted the glory of His divinity to break forth, as it were, and shine through the veil of His human nature, with which it was covered."—*Dr. McKnight.* St. Peter also expressly calls this vision, being "eye-witnesses of His *Majesty.*" 2 Pet. i. 16, 17. St. John, another witness of this scene, was favored by a vision of the glorified body of Jesus as it now exists in heaven, and describes it in the same terms. "His countenance was as the sun in his strength." Rev. i. 16. All the language of the Apostles concerning *the future spiritual bodies of the saints,* seems to have been taken from this vision and the appearance of our Lord's body after the resurrection. We learn from this scene something of the majesty of our Lord, who could thus lay aside the form of man, and manifest His celestial glory. We learn the glory of the *Spiritual Body.* 1. That it is this *same* body which we now have, *transfigured,* i. e. "*changed,*" "made like unto His own glorious body." Phil. iii. 21; 1 Cor. xv. 49. 2. That it is to be made inconceivably glorious and beautiful. 1 Cor. xv. 43, 44. 3. That these changes are not only in the form but in the very and radical nature of the saints. 1 John iii. 2; 1 Cor. xv. 52, 53. Our Lord made this change of His human body visible to these three disciples, for many reasons, as is with reverence presumed: 1. To teach them *the mysteries of His nature.* John i. 14. He was to suffer and die. He admonishes

them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

3 And behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.

4 Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three [a]tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is

a Heb. 9. 8; 2 Pet. 1. 13.

them beforehand, by this vision, that His death was *voluntary*. 2. To show them the *cessation of the authority of the law and prophets*, i. e. the Jewish covenant. Moses, the lawgiver; Elias, the inflexible defender of that law, appeared talking with Him of His decease. Luke ix. 32. They show that they approve of the design of setting aside the law. 3. To manifest the glorified bodies of the saints. Phil. iii. 21. "When he shall appear we shall be like Him." 1 John iii. 2. ¶ *Raiment.* His clothing. St. Luke says: "It was white and glistering." St. Mark: "shining, exceeding white as snow, so as no fuller on earth can white them." They labor to picture to us an inconceivable, soft, pure effulgence of light, that earth has nothing to equal. Is. lxiv. 4; 1 Cor. ii. 9. It symbolizes the "fine linen, which is the righteousness of the saints." Rev. xix. 8. The Church surplice is in humble and far-off imitation of this purity, to teach us that God would have his priests "clothed with righteousness." Ps. cxxxii. 9.

3. *And behold.* They being weary had fallen asleep while Jesus prayed. They did not see the beginning of this vision, nor hear all the conversation. They heard them converse concerning "the decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem." The conversation must have shown also *who they were*, as St. Peter called their names. ¶ *Moses and Elias.* It is noticeable that there hangs a mystery over the end of Moses and Elijah, which agrees with their reappearance here. Moses, in the full vigor of his strength, was summoned to the top of Mount Nebo, where he died. No human hands buried him or knew his sepulchre. Deut. xxxiv. 6. The Jews declared that his body was buried by angels, and that evil spirits contended for it. See Jud. 9. Josephus says; "His body was not found, it disappeared, he ascended, saith the Jews, and ministered to God in the heavens," which was another traditon. This was an error, for it expressly says in Deuteronomy the Lord "buried him in a valley in the land of Moab." He was the great Prophet of the Law; a type of the Mediator, the one on whose name and authority the Jews especially depended. Elias or Elijah "went up in a whirlwind to heaven." See 2 Kings ii. 11–16. The Jews supposed that he was translated to Paradise. But wherever his body may have been preserved, or in what condition it was now shown again to the disciples, in the act of giving testimony to the Lord Jesus. He is a representative, therefore, of the prophets. They appeared as yielding to the Messiah the power which they had before held under the legal dispensation.

4. *Tabernacles.* A tabernacle was a tent. Numb. xxiv. 5. The Israelites for a long period dwelt in them, as the wandering Bedouins do still. The feast of tabernacles, in memory of their once living in tents, was solemnly observed by divine command every year. Lev. xxiii. 34. A tabernacle means also a tent pitched for the honor of God, in which the divine glory was present (Ex. xxv. 8, 9), and sometimes the dwelling place of idols, as the tabernacle of Moloch. Acts vii. 43. ¶ *Peter said, &c.* St. Mark, who is thought to have written his gospel with St. Peter's knowledge and direction, says as if by way of excuse, "for he wist not what to say, for they were sore afraid." This

my[a] beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him.

6 And when the disciples heard *it*, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.[b]

7 And Jesus came and [c]touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.

8 And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.

9 And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.

a Heb. 1. 1, 2. *b* Ex. 33. 20; Gen. 32. 30; Judg. 13. 20, &c; Is. 6. 5–8.

c Dan. 10. 10, 18; Rev. 1. 17.

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amazing glory had dazzled him. He supposed that Jesus had now entered on His proper dignity, that Elias was come according to Malachi's prediction, that Moses himself was then to reconcile the Jews, that a tabernacle either as a tent of abode, or of worship, should be erected there for each, and a new covenant and religion go forth from Mount Tabor, as of old from Mount Zion. His ideas, at best, were confused.

5. *A bright cloud overshadowed.* A soft effulgence, as a cloud of clearest brightness, seemed to descend from above, and cover them. Mortals have no words fit to convey the image of the divine glory. Therefore it is made known to us by the purest elements we have. A cloud is something dark, or made light by *reflection*. But this is a cloud of light. That *overshadows*, or casts a *shade* on objects; but this is itself a light brighter than the sun, and floats over them to illuminate all things. Jehovah's presence was known by this glory, called the *Shechinah*. It was enveloped in the cloudy pillar, which led the Israelites, dark by day to shade them, and light by night. Ex. xiv. 19, 20. It appeared to Moses in the bush. Ex. iii. 2. It was surrounded by all the tremendous agents of nature, spiritual and physical, on Sinai. Ex. xxiv. 15, 16, 17. It dwelt in the tabernacle, and afterwards in the temple, until it was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. Ex. xl. 35–38. 1 Kings viii. 10, 11. It appeared to Isaiah, Ezekiel and others, and lastly to John the Baptist, the last of the old covenant prophets, at the baptism of Jesus. Ch. ii. 17. The disciples now knew that God was present in power among them. They fell down before Him in dismay. The voice of God was heard by them, confirming the Divine Mission of Christ. Well, then, does St. Peter say, "we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His Majesty." 2 Peter i. 16–18.

6. *They fell on their face.* They were afraid of instant death if they looked on God. And knowing the dreadful penalty of offending Him when His glory was present, which had been shown in the destruction of Korah and his company, of Uzziah and others, they were in mortal terror. Man cannot behold the manifestations of God's presence, and not be sore afraid. The piety of the heart is shown in good men, in bowing themselves in humble fear before the visitings of His love. The impious are made to tremble before His ministering spirits, which are flames of fire, thunder, and the terrific agencies of nature. To fear God, is a Christian's delight and safety. He is one brought up "in a steadfast fear and love." The two joined in the heart, save us from sin and all the terrors of the wicked.

9. *Tell the vision to no man.* See note ch. viii. 4. There were evident reasons for this charge. 1. They did not understand at all the spiritual meaning of what they had seen and heard. Three great doctrines were, as we can now see, taught in the transfiguration. The Divinity of Christ, who in the words of God himself is declared to be His Son; the end of the Jewish cove-

10 And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes, that Elias must first come?

11 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come and restore all things:

12 But I say unto you, that Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed: likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.

13 Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

14 ¶ And when they were come

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nant in the Christian: the resurrection of the body. These they knew little about. St. Mark says they questioned among themselves, what rising from the dead should mean. How then could they promote the progress of spiritual truths? 1 Cor. xv. 2d. It would create envy and evil surmisings in the breasts of the other disciples, and ambitious claims on their own part. Such a marked favor to them, while none of the Twelve could see the real bearings of it, would have damaged the peace of the little band. They would think that the vision was meant to entitle the three disciples to especial rights in the kingdom of Christ. After their regeneration by the Holy Ghost, they would see and know better. The Saviour having then risen and appeared to all, would equalize what seemed partial. 3. The Lord Jesus, while He resorted to the great powers over nature, and the glorious manifestations of His greatness, has carefully in all His mission, kept all such accidental powers and scenes in subjection to His greater work and glory, as a Spiritual Saviour and King of saints. This fact after the resurrection, flashed upon the illumined vision of the Apostles; and as St. Peter's first sermon shows, they saw the greatest glory of Jesus to shine out from the humiliation of the *cross*.

10. *Why then say the Scribes, &c.* The question is in consequence of what they had just seen and heard, and implies that they believed that Jesus was the Son of God, and were in perplexity concerning His death, that Moses and Elias had spoken of as about to happen. For knowing the common opinion taught by the Scribes that Elijah the Tishbite must first come (see note, ch. xi. 14; Is. xl. 3; Mal. iv. 5.), they could not see how this decease could happen so soon. The death of Christ, before He had assumed the regal power over the nation, was so entirely opposite to their opinions, that they were troubled by it.

11. *Elias truly shall first come and restore all things.* As if Jesus had said, "they teach what is true, when they say that Elias shall come. It is a part of ancient prophecies that he shall come." He does not mean to say that Elias, whom they had just seen was to come to the nation on a special mission. *To restore all things*, is to prepare the way of the Messiah, to recall men from the error of their ways, by preaching repentance and leading them to reformation. This was a work well suited to the character of the ancient prophet, who had lived in a corrupt age, had defended the law against idolatrous kings, and brought down fire from heaven on its enemies. The work of preparation for the Messiah, however, lay not in denouncing vengeance, but in warning the people, that the last times had come, in leading them to repentance, and pointing out to them the Christ, that they might believe on him; all which had been done by John the Baptist.

12. *Elias is come already.* See Luke i. 17. What the prophets had foretold of him, had been already fulfilled in spirit by John. ¶ *Whatsoever they listed. List* is an old English word now obsolete, from the Danish form of the verb *lust*, to desire or choose; meaning that they had acted according to their pleasure, not according to conscience and right. It is used of the wind blowing without reason to guide it. John iii. 8. So the Jews had without reason rejected

to the multitude, there came to him a *certain* man kneeling down to him and saying,

15 Lord, have mercy on my son; for he is lunatic and sore vexed, for oft-times he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.

John's testimony and baptism. Luke vii. 30. Jesus also taught them "how it is written of the Son of Man that He must suffer many things, and be set at naught." Mark ix. 12. He often after this repeated this instruction both before and after His decease, giving them the Scriptural proofs of it, as something which *must* be. Those proofs from the Old Testament are briefly contained in Is. liii. &c., and were afterwards summed up for our instruction in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

14. See Mark ix. 14–29; Luke ix. 37–43. *And when they came, &c.* They remained the part of a day and a night on the top of the mountain, and came down the next day to the place where they had left the other disciples. They find a multitude gathered around them, with signs of great excitement. The Scribes were present *questioning* them, like subtle foes, having seized this advantage given by the absence of Jesus and the three chief disciples, to confound the others. The disciples had tried to cast out a devil and could not. On this mortifying failure, the Scribes are questioning and doubtless rejoicing that a devil is at last found able to defy their power. They are too skilful in evil to make an open attack, but confine themselves to questions, which are always the most dangerous weapons in the hands of a cunning adversary. The disciples, too highly elated by their former power over evil spirits, are yet ignorant that this power must depend on a devout and humble temper. Confounded by their failure, they are no match for their acute enemies. The cause of Christ in their hands, seems to be at its lowest point. The scene is striking. The exulting Scribes, the confused disciples, the people amazed, the father despairing and in tears, the poor young man lying in the dust, when suddenly the Saviour is seen approaching. All eyes turn to Him. The miracle becomes a *test* of His power. The people salute Him, expressing their satisfaction at seeing Him, for however little they were inclined to a spiritual faith, they were too wise not to desire that the power over devils should be continued. Jesus begins His work in this juncture, by a rebuke to the Scribes, in form of a question: *Why question ye with them?* They deserve it, for it was a *cowardly* act, to worry the sheep in the absence of the shepherd. They make no answer, but look on in silence, and see a miracle, which their previous pride only served to make the more glorious. ¶ *A certain man, kneeling.* St Luke says he *cried out* in great distress. What the Scribes rejoiced at, namely, the ill-success of the disciples in healing his son, was anguish to him. His faith has not, however, failed, but is stretched to agony by the delay. Why should Christians ever despair, when they behold, as in this case, that "man's necessity is God's opportunity."

15. *Lord, have mercy.* Lord, i. e. Master, a title of honor due to a prophet, who had power over devils. Luke ix. 38. The man urges three pleas for mercy. It was his only child. The case was most miserable. The disciples had failed. Have mercy, have mercy. ¶ *Lunatic.* The original is, he is moon-struck, or ruled by the moon, as the word lunacy also means. See note, ch. iv. 24. There was added to this, as a cause of the madness, the awful disease of the epilepsy, or falling sickness, which disorganizes by its fits, body and mind. This is also supposed to be influenced by the moon, and to become more severe at its full. It was characteristic of the epilepsy, to seize the boy violently, cast him down instantly with nervous contractions and spasms, *boil within him*, bring foam to the mouth, agitate the whole body, derange the mind, and make him in all respects a horror to himself and friends. Added to

16 And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him.

17 Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? Bring him hither to me.

18 And Jesus rebuked the devil, and he departed out of him:

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this epilepsy was lunacy, and worse than all, the possession of the evil spirit, seizing the moments when he was near water or fire, to cause the sudden fits, and endanger his life. We have a cause of complicated agony, hardly to be surpassed. Alas! the weary hours, days, years, of that poor father and his only son: what despairing, touching eloquence was there in this cry, "Have mercy on my son!"

17. *O faithless and perverse generation.* O ye men without a reasonable faith, or candid, honest judgment. The whole generation had become perverse; had lost a proper and fair judgment of Him. This exclamation expresses the sorrow and indignation of Jesus, at that universal hard-heartedness and carnal-mindedness of the Jewish people. ¶ *How long shall I suffer you?* Jesus gives us a glimpse of that sense of the "world lying in wickedness," which constantly pressed upon His spirit. What infinite patience in Him, that He endured such contradiction of sinners to the last! What mercy, that He bears with our sins and infirmities now! St. Mark tells us that the evil spirit gave a demonstration of its rage as the boy was brought to Jesus. It threw him upon the ground foaming, tore, that is, raged within him as if destroying him. Jesus allowed this to last for a moment, while He makes the case more noticeable still by asking the father how long it had been so with his son. The answer is *of a child.* The father's half-despairing faith prompts him to say, "*If* thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us and help us." He may have thought from this pause, that it was utterly beyond cure. But no, Jesus intends a lesson of deepest wisdom to come out of it, which shall endure and console myriads of unhappy souls in their prayers to God, long after that boy shall have turned to dust. The miracle is great, this truth is greater. The miracle had its effect with that generation: the truth, which is forced out of the depths of that agonized heart, shall bloom eternally. It was worth the pause. Jesus answers, "It is not *if I can do any thing,* for I can do all things for you—but it is *if thou canst believe—all things are possible to him that believeth.*" Blessed truth! there shines not a brighter than this in all the scripture. The father replies with a a broken heart "with tears." "Hangs then the cure on me?—Lord, I believe. Oh, pardon, bear with me; I am in agony, forgive my weakness, and help thou mine unbelief!" and the work is done. The miracle, like the wings of certain seeds, by which they are borne to distant places, bears this divine truth, to take root in thousands of troubled hearts.

18. *Rebuked the devil.* Bade him depart. He said, "Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee (i. e. command thee) come out of him and enter no more into him." Mark ix. 25. The unclean spirit "rent him, sore," and left him in such a state that many of the bystanders thought him dead. Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up, and delivered him to his father in perfect health. This is the most wonderful cure recorded in the Gospel. Its moral is "all things are possible to him that believeth," the most precious truth for us sinners, that can be taught us. Gal. v. 6, Rom. viii. 25–39.

19. *To Jesus apart.* The nine disciples seem to have been ashamed to ask this question before the multitude. They wait until Jesus has retired with them. They supposed that having been once invested with power over devils, it was not to be limited. They did not discover the true reason, in their want of a spiritual faith, in their worldly ambition and desire for human honor. We

and the child was cured from that very hour.

19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?

20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this [a]mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

21 Howbeit, this kind goeth not out, but by prayer and fasting.

a Ch. 21. 21; 1 Cor. 13. 2; Zech. 4. 7.

regard these incidents concerning that transitory power of miracles, as a vehicle for instructing us in the deeper, enduring mysteries of sanctifying faith, which ejects a worse devil, and cures a deeper seated disease than even this foul spirit, with his train of physical infirmities.

20. *As a grain of mustard-seed, &c.* If ye had the least faith. This leads us to ask whether the disciples had this spiritual faith? And we may doubt it. They believed in Jesus as a powerful prophet, as a king, as one of prodigious designs. But it may be doubted whether they had any idea of true faith in Him as a Saviour of sinners, and as sent to save men from sin by the atonement. They were ambitious; perhaps had designed their own glory in the attempt at casting out the evil spirit, and lost sight of their humble position as disciples. Hence their mortification. Hence their rebuke, in this verse. Hence their true course shown to be to seek this faith, by self-mortification, prayer, and fasting. One grain of the faith shown in St. Peter's discourse on the day of Pentecost, was worth all their confidence in miracles to raise up a temporal kingdom. ¶ *To this mountain, &c.* Ye shall do the things which seem altogether impossible. See Zech. iv. 7. They have done these things, are doing them. Christian faith to remove mountains is now in the Church. Does the infidel ask, why then does not some one remove mountains? We answer, because faith waits for commands of God to be faith. It is not self-will. If God commands a mountain to be removed, or promises its removal, faith would act on such promise. But to move a mountain is a useless miracle. Faith is removing spiritual mountains the world over, knocking at the gates of heathendom, and saying to inveterate prejudices, Remove and vanish. To convert and regenerate a human soul is a greater work than to shake the Alleghanies from their base. See note, ch. xxi. 21.

21. *Howbeit, this kind, &c.* It cannot be determined, whether our Lord here refers to any peculiar demoniac possession to be cast out only by a certain high degree of faith, or seeks only to convey a sense of the peculiar work of the ministry, as His instruments for destroying the power of the devil in the heart. There are no facts concerning apostolic miracles by which to decide. There may have been a kind of demoniac possession, so remarkable, that only a high degree of piety could overcome it, and which St. Paul may refer to (1. Cor. xiii. 2.), as "*all* faith, so as to remove mountains." But with the kinds and degrees of the power of miracles, we are now little concerned. The removal of the more secret dominion of sin can happen only by prayer and fasting, the moral instruments of sanctification. They are necessary to that spiritual power. "Fasting, by weakening the animal life, subdues such passions as are nourished by a continued repletion of the body. Hence fasting has a tendency to free the mind from the domination of passion, which never fails to occasion a great inward perturbation, and at times is found to make even the best men inattentive, at least to the more silent impressions of God's Spirit. Fasting, therefore, produces an inward quietness and calmness very favorable to the growth of faith."—*Dr. McKnight.*

22 ¶ And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, [a]The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men:

23 And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry.

24 ¶ And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received [‖]tribute-*money*,[b] came to Peter, and saith, Doth not your Master pay tribute?

25 He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?

a Chs. 16. 21; 20. 17.

‖ Called in the original, *didrachma*, being in value 15 pence. *b* Ex. 38. 26.

22. See Mark ix. 30–33.; Luke ix. 34, 35. It is to be noticed how the instruction concerning these facts grows clearer each time. Compare Acts xvi. 21, and xx. 17. ¶ *Shall be betrayed.* To betray is to deliver up anything which has been confided by friends, to their enemies. Jesus now began to conceal His movements. He put His life in the power of His disciples alone. They alone knew His haunts, and by this knowledge Judas betrayed Him. Ch. xxvi. 14–16.

23. *And they shall kill him, &c.* These things which are now familiar to all Christians, and which all see to have connection with the whole spirit and doctrine of Scripture, were, as yet, hid from the disciples. St. Luke is very emphatic. "*They understood not this saying, for it was hid from them that they perceived it not; and they feared to ask Him.*" Luke ix. 45. No reader can get a clear and just idea of the events which follow without having this in his mind. The disciples had *not as yet that light of God's Spirit, which should lead them into all truth.* The pentecostal descent was the era of their regeneration. This was as yet not so great an evil as it would afterwards have been. While Jesus was with them, He was their Guide, and saw for them, and defended them from harm. He begins to warn them of these facts of His death, in order to prepare them for it. We may wonder that they should be so obtuse; but our wonder should give way to humiliation at the view it opens to us of the blindness of our common humanity. 1 Cor. ii. 14.

24. *And when they were come to Capernaum, &c.* See note, ch. iv. 13. From the time that Herod Antipas killed John the Baptist, Capernaum ceased to be the ordinary residence of our Lord. Only twice is it recorded that He visited it again: John vi. 25, on His way to the third Passover, and now as He goes up to the Feast of Pentecost. ¶ *Tribute-money.* The didrachm, or half shekel, in value about 30 cents of our money. Every Jew, rich or poor, over twenty years of age, was obliged to pay this yearly tax. It was used for purchasing the animals and other matters necessary for the daily service of the temple. It was a mark of subjection to Jehovah, as their King, and a symbol of the equal right and responsibility which all His subjects had in His temple. See Ex. xxx. 13, 14. ¶ *Doth not your Master, &c.* Your teacher. This was a voluntary tax: there was no power to compel the payment of it. The law in Exodus applied only to the occasions of numbering the people. It seems to have become an ecclesiastical usage, concerning which there was some difference of opinion and practice. These collectors of the tax are therefore in doubt how Jesus would act.

25 *Prevented Him.* Literally, *went before*, or anticipated him by speaking first. The word in the Bible and Prayer Book is often used in this, its original sense. Peter was in doubt; Jesus relieves him by asking this question. It was the more emphatic, that it was asked of Peter, who had just before heard God declaring Jesus to be

26 Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.

27 Notwithstanding, lest we should offend [a]them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up: and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find‖ a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

a Rom. 14. 21; 15. 1-3.

‖ Or a *stater*. It is one-half an ounce of silver, in value 2*s*. 6*d*. after 5*s*. the oz.

His Son, in the Mount of Transfiguration. ¶ *The kings of the earth, &c.* Jehovah was king in the *theocratic* polity of the Jews, in a manner analogous to earthly monarchies. 1 Sam. viii. 5, 7. Upon this the force of the passage turns. ¶ *Of strangers.* Not foreigners, but persons out of their own family and kindred; the subjects of the kingdom.

26. *The children free.* The princes in a kingdom being part of the royal family, and supported by the nation, are not expected to pay taxes. In the same manner, it could not be asked of the Son of God, that He should pay the half-shekel to the temple, which was a symbol of the national subjection to God. He was greater than the temple, and the Son of God: He was not bound to pay this tax. This reasoning would satisfy St. Peter, and bring out clearly in his mind the thoughts which had been struggling there.

27. *Lest we should offend them, &c.* Lest we should give them ground for thinking that we despise the duties of piety, and disregard the temple-service. The doctrine of the Sonship of Christ was not enough known by the Jews, for them to perceive the real reasons of His refusing payment if He had refused, therefore, although free, He chooses to avoid every occasion of giving offence. There is a liberty with which Christ makes us free, but we should use it in imitation of His own example. He chooses to pay tribute, however, in a royal manner, and by a supernatural knowledge. ¶ *Go to the sea.* The sea of Galilee. The articles of fishing were in the house, as doubtless the disciples sometimes assisted in their support, by their former trade. ¶ *A piece of money.* A Stater, a Greek coin, equal in value to a shekel, or 60 cents of our money, sufficent to pay for them both. Thus while subjecting Himself in all points to the law, as a pious Jew, our Lord demonstrates to the disciple, His claim to be the Son of God, and possessed of superhuman knowledge. To cavil as infidels have sometimes done, about *how* the money should be found in the mouth of the fish, manifests an intelligence and sense quite worthy of a fish, which is often tempted to its destruction by bits of shining metal placed about the hook, but utterly unworthy of a rational being. An impostor, in describing such an account, would have given his attention to such a matter, and told us some wonderful story of the fish. The simplicity of the writer of the Gospel manifests his own veracity, and his sense of more important matters. We may learn from this narration the duty of obedience to the powers that be: and the duty of so conducting ourselves in all matters, wherein we may suppose that we have particular knowledge and privilege, so as not to offend our brethren.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1. See St. Mark ix. 33–41; St. Luke ix. 46–50. *Who is the greatest, &c.* The disciples had been greatly troubled at the news of the Saviour's sufferings; but their grief soon wore off, and their thoughts began to turn on the kingdom which He was to set up. They thought it would be a kingdom on this earth, of royal splendor; to make the Jews supreme over all other nations. There would be distinctions and offices in it. Some must be high treasurers, some governors and satraps of provinces, some prime ministers and viziers to stand near the throne. Who should have these offices? On the way to

CHAPTER XVIII.

AT the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, [a]Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

a Lu. 22. 24, &c.

2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted,[b]

b Ch. 13. 15; Acts 3. 19; Jas. 5. 19, 20.

Capernaum they debated this question. The kinsmen of Jesus supposed their blood-relationship would entitle them to peculiar honors. Peter was proud of the distinction with which he had been treated, and James and John were meditating the project, for which they afterwards received the rebuke, recorded chapter xx. 20–24. Thus were the disciples occupied with unworthy ambition, and longings for imaginary honors. Jesus asked them of their dispute, and they, ashamed of it, held their peace. Mark ix. 33. He enters in this chapter upon a direct instruction of them, concerning the *unworldly* spirit which they must cherish in His service.

2, 3. *Except ye be converted, &c.* The word *converted* in Scripture, means a change of the will and purpose of life. A man, for instance, who serves idols, repents of it, forsakes his idols, and seeks after God. The word is sometimes rendered *to repent*. In this voluntary change of will, God *helps* the man by the common influences of His Spirit. Ps. li. 10–12. That man's work is chiefly regarded in conversion is evident from two reasons, among others, besides the natural force of the word. 1. That he is *commanded* to do it. "Repent and be *converted*." Acts iii. 19. Now whatsoever we are required to do, we have some power in doing. Conversion is therefore the great act of repenting and changing one's mind, *by the help of God*. But nowhere are we bidden to regenerate ourselves, or to be regenerated, for that is purely God's work, man only *assenting*, or *non obstante*, not putting an obstacle in the way. And God's work is joined to the rite of Baptism, to mark the time and certainty of it. Conversion or repentance should come first. St. Peter said, "Repent, and be baptized for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, &c." Acts ii. 38. 2. The example of Saul of Tarsus separates distinctly conversion and regeneration. Saul was *converted* by a miracle. Acts ix. 3–9. He fasted and prayed, showing that he had changed, and was completely humbled. But Saul was not *regenerate*. For his sins were not then forgiven, nor had he received the gift of the Holy Ghost. These he received at the visit of Ananias, who came to baptize him, *three days* after his change by the miracle, and who bade him "arise and be baptized, and *wash away* thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Acts xxii. 16. At the time of his baptism he was "filled with the Holy Ghost." Acts ix. 17. It is important to fix this distinction between conversion and regeneration, repentance and the new birth, change of mind and baptism, man's work and God's work in our spiritual birth; for without it we cannot understand the Scripture or the Prayer Book. Great errors have risen from their confusion. The Saviour is here speaking, not of *regeneration* so much as a change of mind, from the ambitious thoughts of earthly empire, to the humility becoming disciples; that, like children, they be free from the designs and strifes of which they were then guilty. Says Dr. Whitby: "He tells them that these inclinations, desires and expectations were inconsistent with their being members of that spiritual kingdom which He was to erect, since they who followed Him chiefly on these accounts, when they saw no such thing could be expected from Him, but rather the quite contrary, must desert Him." Read the exhortation in the office of Baptism of those of riper years. ¶ *Become as little children.* Children are humble, docile, and free from ambitious designs. What our Lord asked of the disciples was trust in Him, and

and become as little [a]children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven

4 [b]Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

5 And whoso shall [c]receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me.

6 But, whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

a 1 Pet. 2. 2. *b* Jas. 4. 10. *c* Ch. 10. 40, 42.

obedience, with a voluntary surrender of their earthly wealth and power. "God resisteth the proud, and giveth graces to the humble." 1 Peter v. 5.

4. *Greatest, &c.* Greatest in the sight of God; most gifted with the spirit of the gospel, and most honored with the signs of an Apostle. As we forget ourselves and mortify our evil desires, God remembers and blesses us. "In the eye of God, humility is a most sublime virtue."—*Bp. Porteus.*

5. *One such little one.* Not little ones in age, but in disposition. To receive such, is to have the humility of a Christian—to be truly a disciple. See note chap. x. 40–42. To encourage His followers, our Saviour promises to take care of them. He makes common cause with His faithful disciples. See ch. xxxv. 35–40. "In connection with this, St. Mark (ch. ix. 38–40) and St. Luke (ix. 49, 50) relate the reproof to John in particular, for having forbidden one to cast out devils in the name of Jesus. It was an unwarrantable presumption of John, and those who had acted with him, because the power itself proved the commission." A commission to the Christian ministry now must be proved by *a regular succession* from those who received it, or *by miracle.* St. Paul was called by a miracle to preach, and also gifted with miraculous powers to prove it. He seems to have been very tender on the matter of baptizing, as that particular part of the commission of the ministry which symbolizes and preserves unity (Eph. iv. 4, 5), and which had been especially committed to the twelve. 1 Cor. 1-12; ch. xxviii. 19. We have a right then to doubt the commission to preach and baptize of all those, who can offer nothing better than their own word, or the choice of fallible men like themselves.

6. *Shall offend, &c.* Shall cause one to fall away from the faith. See note, ch. v. 29. "To offend in the Scriptural use of the word, is to cause any one to fall from the faith, or renounce his belief in Christ, and against every one who causes such a fall the heaviest woes are denounced."—*Bp. Porteus.* "False therefore is it, that they who truly do believe in Christ, and are of the number of those whom God would have not to perish (verse 14), cannot be so offended as to fall from the faith and perish. And were this so, wherein lies the force of this pathetical discourse, and why are such dreadful woes and punishments denounced to deter men from doing what not only is itself impossible, but which they also who are thus threatened believe to be so."—*Dr. Whitby.* ¶ *That a millstone, &c.* This was an ancient mode of punishment for certain great crimes, practised by the Syrians, Greeks, and others. It is said that the Jews "cast execrable men into the Dead Sea, with a stone tied to them." It was a punishment also for *sacrilege*, to which the crime of seducing Christians to their ruin is akin. To ruin the soul of the feeblest Christian, will be visited by a punishment so fearful, that it would have been better for the one who did it, if he had been drowned in the sea, as a criminal or sacrilegious person. There are grades of punishment in hell. The one who ruins souls merits the worst.

7. *Offences.* Things which cause others to *sin*, *stumbling blocks* in the path of the righteous. These will cause men to fall from Christ, and will bring upon

7 ¶ Wo unto the world because of offences! for it [a]must needs be that offences come; but wo to that man by whom the offence cometh!

8 Wherefore, if thine[b] hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast *them* from thee; it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire.

9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into [‖]hell-fire.

10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels[c] do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

a 1 Cor. 11. 19; Jude 4. *b* Ch. 5. 29, 30.

‖ Or, *the Gehenna of fire.* *c* Acts 12. 15; Heb. 1. 14.

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the world which had raised them the severest woes. See note ch. v. 29, 30. ¶ *It must needs be.* God has not decreed by any secret decree, that there shall always be some men in the world who must necessarily work out their own ruin, by the temptation of others into sin, by inventing heresies to corrupt the doctrines of salvation, by making schisms, to lead astray the simple-minded and unlearned Christians, and by spreading the baits of pleasure before the unwary. Our Lord only foretells what will happen. God has allowed men liberty and free-will to choose between good and evil. It is certain that some will choose evil and cause the ruin of others. The cause will be their own evil wills. The necessity is in the obstinacy of men. ¶ *Woe to that man, &c.* If offences came in any sense, because men could not help it, either because God had determined that certain should be created to be lost, or had determined to pass over them and not give them the grace which was absolutely necessary to enable them to choose good rather than evil, then no just woe could be denounced against such. That which one cannot help doing is the law of his being, and to fulfil the *necessary supreme* laws of being, is holiness. God gives men every means of grace to help them to do good. He permits them, if they will, to refuse. The refusal He denounces as wickedness.

8, 9. See notes, ch. v. 29, 30. The same idea is repeated, almost in the same words, as in the Sermon on the Mount. 'It is better for you, My disciples, to go into heaven, with nothing but My word to plead, than to be cast away for the sake of thrones.' Jesus would mortify their ambition. We are not to take these words literally. God does not permit us to injure and maim our bodies in order to avoid temptation, but shows us, by this lively figure of speech, that we should deny our selfish and proud desires, and "mortify our members which are upon the earth." Col. iii. 5.

10. *Take heed that ye, &c.* Disciples. Christians. St. Jerome understood it of children also. "Great is the dignity of these little ones, seeing every one of them from his birth hath an angel delegated to preserve him." To despise such, is to neglect to use the means of their reformation and salvation, which may be in our power: or to put temptations in their way. Men often despise the poor, the infant, or the humble Christian, do them wrong, almost force them, by oppression into doing evil—not remembering that God is the avenger of all such. 1 Thess. iv. 6; James v. 6. The reason of the command not to despise such, is that angels are their ministering spirits. *To behold the face of God,* means to be present before His more immediate glory, and intrusted with high commissions and powers. It has been doubted by some few persons, whether there are single angels delegated to minister a special providence

11 For the Son of man is come to save that[a] which was lost.

12 How think ye? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that *sheep*, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

14 Even so it is not the [b]will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

a 1 Tim. 1. 15.

b 2 Pet. 3. 9.

to each one of the saints. The Jews, and the great majority of Christians have united in the opinion that there are such special angels to care for each soul. See Acts xii. 15; Ps. xxxiv. 7; Heb. i. 14. The meanest Christian is guarded in his efforts to be holy by the subtler spiritual knowledge of his attendant angel. Therefore, if the celestial powers are ministering spirits to Christians, and employed in serving them, bold and foolish must he be who dares to despise or injure them.

11. *For the Son of man, &c.* Not only are the angels so employed, but it was on purpose to save such that the Son of man came and died. Ezekiel describes in fearful language, the guilt of neglecting and despising the souls of the Christian flock. Ez. xxiii. 1–10. And St. Paul (1 Cor. viii. 9–13), exhorts Christians not to do any thing by which "the weak brother should perish, *for whom Christ died.*" Perhaps no other sin is followed by such a weight of punishment. ¶ *That which was lost.* Sinners. That our Lord Jesus came to save all men who will believe in Him and keep His commandments, and that all men need His salvation, and so are properly said to be *lost*, is proved by most certain warrants of Scripture. Acts iv. 12; Mark xvi. 16; Rom. iii. 23–26. Yet here He speaks of those who like the one sheep wander from the rest, like the piece of money are not found with the others in the treasury, or like the prodigal son are *abandoned* sinners, as we say, and are the opposite of *righteous* or good men. If our Lord came to save such, it is beyond all question certain, that God has never left them to be lost. If they are lost, it is their own sin.

12–14. See St. Luke xv. 4–10. The three parables contained in St. Luke xv. are all comments upon this same principle, that the Lord Jesus values beyond price, the souls, not only of devout and religious men, who need no repentance, that is, no universal, public change from a vicious life, but also all those poor creatures who were despised by the Pharisees; the disgraced and degraded wretches, who, stained with open crimes, are suffering the contumely due to them. Such were often spoken of as "publicans and sinners"—"publicans and harlots." So here the one sheep which is lost, is not a type of all men whatsoever, but of all who have stumbled into great sin, have left those who were, with all their imperfections, yet to be considered as righteous men. These Christ had come to save, and angels rejoiced over when brought back. See James v. 19, 20. We are not to suppose that the Lord Jesus loves such better than His sons who "are ever with Him," but simply that the joy of the shepherd shows his value of the wanderer, and images to our minds the tender pity which good beings have even for the erring and lost member of the Church.

This portion of the present chapter forms the Holy Gospel for September 29: the festival of *St. Michael and all angels.* St. Michael was a chief among the archangels and the princely guardian spirit of the Jewish nation. Dan. x. 13, 21; xii. 1; Rev. xii. 7; Jude ix. The Jews believed that there were "seven holy angels which present the

15 ¶ Moreover,[a] if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.[b]

a Lev. 19. 17; Lu. 17. 3.

b Jas. 5. 20.

prayers of the saints, and go in and out before the Holy One." Tobit xii. 15. See Rev. iv. 5; v. 6. Besides these were other ranks and a numberless array of glorious spirits. Dan. vii. 10; Rev. v. 2. Three angels met with Abraham, one of them the Son of God, the others created beings. Gen. xviii. 2–20. The one called the *Angel of the Lord* in the Old Testament, is by the best authorities, considered to be the Son of God. Thus the heavenly hosts are arrayed. Over all the Son of God Jehovah, Lord of *Hosts*, i. e. of the hosts of the angels. Next archangels, principalities, powers and dominions. See Gen. xvi. 7–14; xix. 1, 2; Dan. vii. 10; Matt. iv. 11; xxviii. 2, 7; Luke i, 11–19; xvi. 22; xxii. 43; Acts xii. 7–9; Heb. i. 14; 2 Thess. i. 7, 8. We are taught by the collect to pray that the holy angels may "succor and defend us on earth." We should meditate on the angelic ministry. 1. To be excited to thankfulness. Ps. xci. 11. 2. To imitate their love and willing labor for others, their joy for the salvation of penitents. Luke xv. 10. 3. To take courage from their defence. They are God's providential causes to shield us from harm. 2 Kings v. 16, 17; Dan. vi. 22. 4. To bear about with us an idea of their purity. They see us, perhaps, at all times—we should strive to feel this, till we may hate *secret sins* as much as public. Eccles. v. 6. But lastly, we should beware of a superstitious worship of them. Col. ii. 18. They are our fellow servants, and abhor the great sin of idolatry. Rev. xxii. 8, 9. The Church of Rome violates the spirit and letter of the whole Bible, in commanding, as she so wickedly doth, the worship of angels and saints.

15. *Moreover.* Besides what I have already said, you are to observe certain rules in dealing with the erring. If any member of the flock commits a fault, you are to seek to reclaim him. ¶ *If thy brother.* This brotherhood is a Christian relation. Christians are members of the same family, mystically united to Christ, and are in the truest sense *brethren.* This spiritual relationship the disciples were taught to value so highly, that they should make all proper efforts to prevent the most offensive Christians, so long as there were signs of a desire to repent and do right, from finally falling. Church censures are to bear the marks of love, and to aim at the salvation of the offender. ¶ *Trespass against thee.* A sin against an individual Christian is some evident, unmistakeable offence against the laws of charity, by evil speaking, harsh judgment, or injurious or violent conduct. It must be a definite offence, not any mere imagined injury. ¶ *Go and tell him his fault.* Go and make him ashamed of it. Tell him his fault in such a prudent manner, that he shall feel it and repent. Lev. xix. 17. It is better to speak out such wrongs than to brood over them. This rule will remove mistakes. Parties who imagine grievous wrongs, will often find that both have been innocently in error, both been hasty, and will frequently have reason to rejoice in a timely explanation. Jesus is here instructing the future rulers of the Church in all time, how they are to reclaim offenders in the Church. He selects the most extreme case, of one offending against *them* to include all others. The offence must be in some degree against the laws of Christian fellowship. First they must go privately and reprove him. Tit. ii. 15. This reconciliation they were first to seek *alone.* Power to reclaim Christian men consists mostly in persuasion. The minister is not to condemn unheard. To publish a fault is to punish it. It hardens the mind of the offender, while it may deeply injure those who are innocent. This private reproof is often a great blessing. The offender confesses his fault and amends

16 But if he will not hear *thee*, *then* take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of [a]two or three witnesses every word may be established.

17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the church:

[a] Deut. 19. 15.

his conduct. The minister or Christian who follows any other rule, and begins his discipline of his brethren by publishing a fault, is acting contrary to the law of Christ, is acting foolishly, and sometimes wickedly, and may destroy the souls of his brethren. ¶ *Thou hast gained, &c.* James v. 20. The word *gained* is used with great force. It joins this precept to the 13th verse. Thou hast found the erring brother, who had strayed away like a lost sheep, and gained him to Christ and to thee. St. Paul uses the same word in converting men to the faith of the Gospel. 1 Cor. ix. 19. Holy and blessed are such gains, treasures indeed laid up in heaven before God.

16. *That in the mouth, &c.* The Jewish law required at least two witnesses to every fact of crime and offence against the laws. Deut. xvii. 6; xix. 15. The Christian rule is the same. John viii. 17; 2 Cor. xiii. 1; Heb. x. 28. The design of taking two witnesses is twofold. 1. That the offending brother may be possibly induced to repent and return, if he has been proud and refractory, when he sees that persons of serious character and candid judgment are also condemning his fault. 2. That in administering the discipline of the Church, the ministers of it may be certain to proceed on good grounds, and free themselves from all suspicion of partiality or passion. The common reason of men has approved of the Mosaic regulation concerning two witnesses for every fact. The laws of evidence in courts of justice consider the proof as good which is thus supported. Sometimes exceptions occur, but not in such cases as are contemplated by this precept of discipline. In Church discipline, the minister is to see to it that he shall have two responsible witnesses to the incorrigibleness of a Church member, before he proceed to extremities.

17. *Tell it the church.* The Church authorities, who are set and ordained for this end, and act in the name of the whole body. See ch. xvi. 18. The Church has from the earliest times recognized that the power of discipline is by Scripture and reason placed in the hands of the Bishops, as the successors of the Apostles. The epistles of St. Paul to Timothy and Titus, both bishops, and St. Paul's own practice clearly show us that the power of punishing offenders, and suspending them from the rites of the Church, lies in the office of Bishops. They are, as the word bishop means, the overseers, set over us to this very end. The Church to which we belong has as a body, clergy, and laity, resolved on certain canons and rubrics, or laws by which discipline shall be administered in all parishes. If a man who is a communicant acts as is here described, and the minister of the parish is certified that he is "an open and notorious evil liver," or "has done any wrong by word or deed, so that the congregation be thereby offended," or "is at variance with others," and remains, after all efforts to reconcile him, "in frowardness and malice," he shall "advertise him, that he presume not to come to the Lord's table until he have openly declared himself to have truly repented and amended his former evil life, that the congregation may be thereby satisfied." He must at once give "an account of the same to the Ordinary," that is, to the Bishop of the Diocese. If the man who is suspended from the Communion by the minister of his parish be dissatisfied at this, he may appeal to the Bishop, who shall examine and decide the case. Thus does the Episcopal Church seek to obey scriptural precepts, and promote purity in her members. ¶ *A heathen man and a publican.* Avoid him. Do not let it appear that you despise Church censure, by treating him as other Christians. By a prudent conduct in this matter, pri-

but if he neglect *to* hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen[a] man and a publican.

18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth,[b] shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.

19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name,

a Tit. 3. 10; Rom. 16. 17; 1 Cor. 5. 3–5; 2 Thes. 3. 6, 14. *b* John 20. 23; 2 Cor. 2. 10.

c Acts 1. 24–26; 4. 29–31; 12. 12, 16; 25. 26.

vate Christians may give great weight to the lawful judgments of their pastors. Most disastrous is it to Church order, when the offender may sneer at the laws he promised to obey, knowing that any of half a dozen sects will be willing to receive him as a convert, and perhaps sympathize with him as a persecuted man! John x. 11; Rom. xvi. 17; 1 Cor. v. 4, 5; Tit. iii. 10, 11. Church discipline is thereby reduced to a mere name. And too often the bolder offenders against the laws of charity are able to cast contempt upon the clergy, and after causing turmoil and difficulty in the Church, may turn to some neighboring denomination with every appearance of victory in the struggle. The ministry have often a thankless duty in attempting to preserve their flocks from these wolves in sheep's clothing. The people should sustain and sympathize with them while they observe the laws and canons. ¶ *Publican.* See note, ch. v. 47.

18. See note, ch. xvi. 19. The commission of the Apostolic succession is clearly declared. The bishops and pastors of the Church, are now to do the same work as the Apostles, saving that they do not by inspiration settle the general principles of truth. It is their duty faithfully and courageously to teach and follow the inspired writings. They are one with the Apostles, and claim a scriptural authority as the former did, in Christ's name. Says the late Bp. Henshaw: "We are humble and unworthy, it is true, but His real representatives: 'as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.'" Says Bp. McIlvaine: "Though many Iscariots be found under its (the present ministry's) awful responsibilities, the *integrity of the office, as essentially identical with that of the Apostles, is in no wise affected.*"

19. *Again, &c.* Though private Christians may be sure that their prayers are always heard, yet the truth here taught is one relating rather to Church discipline. When two or three Apostles or Bishops were together, and in strict obedience to law and right did pray for the Spirit of God to guide them in Church discipline, their sentence was binding. Acts. v. 3. xiii. 9–11. Though all Church censures now are given by fallible men, and may be reversed; yet if rightly and lawfully done, they must bind on earth, and be regarded *by all* as sacred. The Scripture supplies to them the lack of inspiration, and humble prayer procures the blessing of the spirit of wisdom upon their faithful endeavors to do what is right. John 20. 19; Matt. 28. 20; 1 Cor. 4. 1.

20 *For when, &c.* This was said to the Apostles, and to them in their character as the representatives of the whole ministry in all ages and countries, and again as representatives of the whole Church in all the world. It is a general assertion, true in both particulars. When two or three of the former—the Apostolic ministry—are met in Christ's name for discipline, reclaiming offenders and the like, matters concerning the wise governing and spread of the Church and Gospel, there will Christ be to guide them; and equally, when they with Christian people, meet for prayer and praise, the promise holds good,

there am I in the midst of them.

21 ¶ Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but,[a] Until seventy times seven.

23 ¶ Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king which would take account of his servants.

[a] Gen. 4. 24.

provided they fulfil all that is implied in the words *in My name*. For this requires some more proof than an inward argument. If two sinners meet in Christ's name to pray, He will hear them, though that is hardly implied here. It means that we are to have *every proof* of an Apostolic doctrine and fellowship, that we are outwardly as well as inwardly united to the Apostles, and to Him. ¶ *I am in the midst of them*. By the Holy Ghost; by His divine nature, in which He is omnipresent. His human nature is only and alone in heaven, and cannot be in all places. Therefore the Romanists have fallen into a fond and foolish error, when they make an attribute of the Divine nature to belong to the natural flesh and blood of the body begotten of the Virgin Mary. That body cannot be spread abroad in all the earth in the sacrifice of Mass, as they pretend. By His Holy Spirit especially present in the Communion does Christ invite believers to Him, in His mystical Body, as "members incorporate." And by this spirit He is with them to the end of the world. The symbols of Church worship are mute emblems of that presence. The growth in spiritual things, in love and charity, and other graces, are moral proofs of it. We should rejoice where all things combine to show the signs of our Lord's presence.

21. *Then came Peter, &c.* St. Peter felt that there had been implied a free forgiveness of the fault of the offender: as even in the severest dealing with him which was allowed, it was all done in love, and to recall him to duty. Not knowing how far this might go, he asks this question. ¶ *Till seven times*. St. Chrysostom well says that "when Peter instanced seven as the number of times that an offending brother should be forgiven, he accounted certainly that he was doing some great thing; that his charity was taking a large stretch, these seven being four times more than the Jewish masters enjoined. The Jewish doctors founded their precept of forgiving *three* times only on the three passages; Amos i. 3; ii. 6. and Job. xxxiii. 29, 30. Peter felt that a larger measure would be prevalent in the Church.

22. *Until seventy times seven.* An unlimited number. The same expression is used in the description of *revenge* in the case of Lamech; Gen. iv. 24. The duty of forgiveness in the Church has no limit, save in the want of penitence in the offender. While the offender repents, we must forgive. Is it said that this virtue is beyond our ability? Nay. Two things are to be noticed. 1. That the penitence must be sincere, which can hardly happen so often: yet as often as the offender may say with a shadow of truth "I repent," we surely may forgive. 2. Though we may not reach the limit, as that limit can, in the very nature of things, be nothing short of perfection: yet it can do us no harm to strive after it. Says Prof. Trench, "The purpose of Our Lord is to make it clear, that when God calls on a member of His kingdom to forgive, He does not call on Him to *renounce a right*, but that he has now no right to exercise in the matter: asking for and accepting forgiveness, He has implicitly pledged himself to show it."

23. *Therefore.* Because there is no limit to this principle among Christians (Eph. iv. 32.), you may learn your duty and relations to God in My Church by the following parable. The law of the Church in this matter, He says, is like the disposition shown by this king. This is the first of a series of parables in which the Lord of the Kingdom of grace

24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him ‖ten thousand talents.

25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold,[a] and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

26 The servant therefore fell down and ‖worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

27 Then the lord of that servant

‖ *A talent is* 750 *oz. of silver which after* 5*s. to the oz. is* £187. 10*s.* *a* Neh. 5. 6; Is. 58. 6.

‖ Or *besought him.*

is likened to a king. This *new feature* grows in clearness as we read on from this beginning. ¶ *Take account of his servants.* The word servant in this story, has a wide meaning; all the under officers, governors and satraps, as well as menials. In the East, all the officers of government were subject to the will of the despot. He could remove or destroy any of them. This king is imagined to desire at a certain time to discover how affairs were managed in his kingdom, and he makes an examination into the accounts of his governors, and beginning with some lordly satrap, he finds him in his debt. The counterpart of this royal action of taking account of the servants, is not the *final* judgment of all men by the Lord Jesus, but the awakening of the conscience here in this life by conviction of sin, and fear of future woe. 1 John iii. 20; Rom. viii. 24. God may be said to take account of a man, when conscience, which is His servant, excites a penitence for sins, and sends him to Him for pardon.

24. *Begun to reckon.* With the first, who had governed the largest province. For none but a chief minister or vizier could owe this sum. How striking is this feature of the story. God only *begins* to reckon with us, and we are found to be hopelessly indebted to His law. Job. ix. 2, 3; Ps. cxxx. 3. We can never answer Him for our sins. ¶ *Ten thousand talents.* A round number is used to give us the idea of the *hopelessness of payment.* If the Hebrew talent is here meant, the sum is enormous. The sum in silver was over 15,000,000 dollars. If reckoned in gold, it was beyond all possibility of payment. We may form some idea of the amount, by comparing other sums spoken of in Scripture. In the tabernacle 29 talents of gold were used (Ex. xxxviii. 24); for the temple David prepared 3000 of gold, the princes 5000. 1 Chron. xxix. 4–7. The queen of Sheba gave Solomon 120 talents (1 Kings x. 10); Hezekiah was taxed 30 talents of gold (2 Kings xviii. 14), and finally the land was taxed *one* talent of gold. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 3. Darius offered to buy off Alexander from entering his kingdom, with ten thousand talents: and the latter, in paying his army at Suza, used twice the sum. The defaulter was then some chief person, who had kept back and expended on himself the revenues of his province, instead of sending them to the king. Now, the sum has exceeded all possibility of payment. This huge debt is the *likeness* of our sins, which no power of ours can ever pay. Rom. ii. 5.

22. *To be sold, &c.* The Jewish law and customs allowed the selling of insolvent debtors into a mild state of domestic slavery. Lev. xxv. 39, 41; 2 Kings iv. 1. Or the king may have been a Gentile ruler, and this slavery may have been a state of harsh and cruel bondage.

26. *And worshipped him.* "This formal act of worship or adoration, consisted in prostration on the ground, and kissing the feet and knees; and here Origen bids us to note the nice observance of proprieties in the details of the parable. This servant *worshipped* the king, for that honor was paid to royal personages; but it is not said that the other servant worshipped, but only besought."—*Trench.* Dr. Shaw, the trav-

was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants, which owed him an ‖hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

29 And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

‖ *The Roman penny is the 8th part of an oz., which after 5s. the oz. is 7d. half penny.*

30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

31 So when his fellow servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

33 Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fel-

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eller, informs us that the same custom is still practised by the Arabs, in the presence of superiors.

27. *Then the Lord, &c.* Thus does the severity of God endure only till the sinner is brought to repentance. He grants more than we deserve or desire. The servant who was crushed to the earth, about to lose wife, children, liberty and all, and to become a slave to another; all which changes may occur in Eastern countries in a moment, is amazed at this pardon. It finds a parallel only in the acts of grace by which God pardons sinners. ¶ *Loosed him.* Set him free. The same word is used of the act of setting Barabbas out of prison. Ch. xxvii. 15. In the East the will of the king is absolute, and such sudden changes are very natural and common. With us, who are unused to them, it is easier to imagine and feel the truth of God's pardoning us sinners on repentance, than to conceive of such an act on the part of a fellow man. If we value the pardon of sins in our own case, it moves us to gratitude, and makes us gentle to the faults of others.

28. *An hundred pence.* The denarius, or penny, was a Roman coin, worth 15 cents of our money. The whole sum was therefore about $15; or compared with his own debt, in the proportion of one million of dollars to one. It should have been a trifling sum to one who had been able to become so great a defaulter. This so small sum shows how little after all men can sin against their brethren, compared with their guilt towards God. Hence the wickedness of an unforgiving temper, since it shows a want of humility under such a weight of pardon. ¶ *Took him by the throat, &c.* Was harsh and violent, as if to compel immediate payment. He had no pity; was not humbled under the sense of his own pardon. One who "receives grace must show grace; finding love, he must exercise it."

31. *So when his fellow-servants, &c.* The design of this is not of course to teach Christians that they are to carry complaints of their brethren before God, which would be to destroy the very principles of humility and charity; but to show that such conduct as this man's meets with condemnation from men as well as God. Such cruelty and hardness is against the common notions of right. His fellow-servants were grieved, and in sorrow at such heartlessness, inform their lord of it. In the breast of a good Christian the sight of quarrels, of bickering, and unforgiving tempers among brethren, will work *grief* rather than anger, for he will mourn that the gentle spirit of mercy is so little cherished by those who have only mercy to look to for salvation.

low-servant, even as I had pity on thee?

34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the [a]tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

35 So likewise[b] shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

a 1 Kings 22. 27.

34. *The tormentors.* Literally the *triers.* In the East it was common for men to conceal property and pretend to be very poor, in order to escape the rapacity of the powerful. Hence the custom was practised of subjecting them to torture, in order to compel them to betray their wealth. These tormentors were jailers and others, who were skilful in applying agonies to unwilling prisoners. The tormentors to whom the sinner will be subjected, are fellow-sinners and wicked spirits, instruments of the just anger of God.

35. *So likewise.* Upon this condition hangs the Divine forgiveness of us in this world. Col. iii. 13; Eph. iv. 32; Matt. v. 7; Luke vi. 37; James v. 9. "All forgiveness short of the crowning act of forgiveness and mercy which will find place on the day of judgment, and will be followed by the impossibility of sinning any more, is conditional—in the very nature of things so conditional, that the condition must, in every case, be assumed, whether stated or no; that condition being, that the forgiven man abide in faith and obedience, in that state of grace into which he has been brought, which he whom the unmerciful servant here represents had not done, but on the contrary, evidently and plainly showed by his conduct, that he had 'forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.' He whom this servant represents does not abide in the light of love (1 John i. 7), but falls back into the old darkness; he has, therefore no fellowship with his brother, and the cleansing power of that blood ceases upon him." See 1 John iv. 20, 21; ii. 9. ¶ *From your hearts.* "In deed and in truth." 1 John iii. 18. This law of pardon must be supreme, and rule down all rebellious excuses and little lingerings of hatred and revenge.

"*O Lord,* who hast taught us that all our doings, without charity, are *nothing worth;* send Thy Holy Ghost and pour into our hearts that most excellent gift of charity, the very bond of peace and of all virtues; *without which whosoever liveth is counted dead* before Thee. Grant this, for Thine only Son Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

CHAPTER XIX.

AND it came to pass, *that* when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea, beyond Jordan:

2 And great multitudes followed him, and he healed them there.

3 ¶ The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and say-

b Col. 3. 13; Eph. 4, 32; Lu. 6. 37; Jas. 5. 9.

CHAPTER XIX.

1. See Mark x. 1–12. The interval of time between the last chapter and this is supposed to have been no less than *five months;* the events and conversations of the last having occurred in May, while these happened in October and November, only five months before the Crucifixion. Jesus left Galilee, crossing the lake, and coming down on the east side of the river Jordan, opposite the country of Judea: a region which He had scarcely visited before. And His miracles are done for the sick and afflicted of that neighborhood, as before in other places. ¶ *Coasts of Judea.* Regions bordering upon or neighboring to Judea.

2. *Tempting Him.* Seeking to induce Him to express an opinion which should injure Him in the eyes of the people. It was an artful question on two accounts. 1. The Jews were very

ing unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

4 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read,[a] that he which made *them* at the beginning, made them male and female,

5 And said, [b]For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?[c]

6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

7 They say unto him, Why did

a Gen. 1. 27; Mal. 2. 15. *b* Gen. 2. 24; Eph. 5. 31.

c 1 Cor. 6. 16.

much divided in opinion as to the law. It was impossible to satisfy both parties. He would gain the ill will of those whose opinion He condemned. There were two opinions current. The school of rabbi *Hillel* taught that a man might divorce his wife *for any reason*, for any slight offence, or merely for his dislike of her person or manners, because of the words, "if she found not favor in his eyes," which occur Deut. xxiv. 1. The opposite school of rabbi *Shammai* allowed it *only* for adultery, on account of the words which follow in the same passage, "because he hath found some uncleanness in her." The Pharisees ask Jesus to settle this difficulty, hoping to injure Him with one side or the other. 2. They probably suspected His opinions —opinions whose strictness and purity would, as they thought, seem harsh and impossible to the carnal multitude about Him. Thus they would rouse against Him the worst feelings of men, as against one who wished to deprive them of a proper liberty. ¶ *Put away.* Divorce. Many in this day are unwilling to be bound by any restraint. The Christian must be firm and well informed on so important a matter. All must feel that *no matter what license* may be granted by the laws of the State, "that if any persons are joined together otherwise than as God's Word doth allow, their *marriage is not lawful.*" And again, that those whom God hath joined together no man has power to put asunder, unless for crime specified by Divine Law.

4–6. *And He answered, &c.* The Saviour in His reply avoids the first difficulty, by citing a passage of Scripture, that went behind the interpretations of both rabbis, and settled the question, by the original design of marriage, as shown by an undisputed text. Gen. i. 27; ii. 21, 24. This would remove the question from the foolish glosses of Hillel and Shammai, to the plain Word of God. Neither school could oppose Him for it, without impiety. ¶ *For this cause.* Because they were made as one pair, therefore they shall be united in pairs. The natural world is the type of the spiritual. The Apostle St. Paul has taught us, that in this act of Divine creation, God has shown us a groundwork and preparatory symbol of "Christ and the Church." Eph. v. 32, 33. ¶ *Shall leave, &c.* It shall be his duty to leave father and mother rather than his wife. The marriage tie is the closest and most sacred in the world, intended for the propagation of the race, and the protection and education of each successive generation. ¶ *Shall cleave, &c.* The original word implies a union, which nothing can dissolve. ¶ *They twain shall be one flesh.* As the original woman was by the power of the Creator taken out of the flesh of Adam, so is the wife reminded that she has something of the same relation to her husband. She is *wedded* to him, the bond between them being altogether of another kind from any human compact or covenant. The only parallel to this relation is the union of the soul to Christ. 1 Cor. vi. 15–20; vii. 4, 5; Eph. v. 28–33. It is a sad sign of infidel principles in high places and low when we see the wicked laws, which are now made, and the lax pub-

Moses then command[a] to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?

8 He saith unto them, Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.

9 And I say unto you, [b]Whosoever shall put away his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away, doth commit adultery.

10 ¶ His disciples say unto

a Deut. 24. 1.

b Ch. 5. 32; Lu. 16. 18.

lic opinion which is prevalent upon this subject. Man's laws cannot change the law of God, nor the inviolableness of the marriage bond. It is a solemn oath of union, in which each party vows fidelity till death parts them. And from infidelity of one kind, unbelief in the sacredness of marriage; will soon spring up infidelity of heart towards Him who has made those sanctions; and then comes a long train of crimes and evils as a consequence.

7. *Why did Moses, &c.* See note, ch. v. 31. The Pharisees have lost their vantage ground, yet they press the question, in regard to Moses, hoping yet to entrap Him. A clear and honest desire for truth, would have taken another course. Nothing is more noticeable than the different manner in which Jesus refutes the cavilling of His enemies, and answers the questions of the simple earnest seekers of truth. ¶ *Writing of divorcement.* A written certificate of her being divorced, and the cause of it; so that the woman could be married again, if she were so minded.

8. *The hardness of your hearts.* Unless they had been allowed this lesser evil, they were so cruel and sensual that they would have committed greater crimes. They would have murdered their wives, or found false witnesses to make them out guilty of adultery, or have fallen outright into the debasing vices of the heathen. Now, one object of the choice of the nation by God, being to have them preserved as a distinct people, till the time of the Messiah, He permitted them this larger liberty: only regulating it by certain checks and laws. ¶ *Moses suffered you, &c.* The Pharisees said "Why did Moses *command?*" Jesus reminds them that it was not a command, but a *sufferance.* God saw fit to allow this latitude to the Jews, but only to *allow* it. The right and strict law, such as had been in the beginning while Adam and Eve were in the state of innocence, would now be restored in the kingdom of grace. Wherefore it seems that the school of Shammai taught the purest morality concerning divorce, while the school of Hillel gave the true sense of the law. That law was mainly to regulate a *license*, of which the Jews were over fond. It shows the degeneracy of mankind; that the severest penalties, which human laws can inflict, are necessary to prevent the evils which the wicked passions of men would otherwise produce.

9. Marriage is brought back to its original state and intention, and the sin of adultery is now made evident beyond mistake. Whosoever, then, is married contrary to God's word, that is in the forbidden degrees, or has put away one wife, not an adulteress, and married another, or vice versa; or whoever has married the woman proved to have been adulterous, such an one is under the curse of God, and should be excommunicate from the Church, so long as he or she remains in this connection. 1 Cor. v. 5. All the legislatures and infidel presses in the world cannot remove the curse. They only number themselves among those who deny the Word of God, and call evil good. Each must guard his own heart, and in the just and careful regulation of what he finds there, must seek for safety and innocence.

10. *Not to marry.* They thought

him, If the case of the man be so with *his* wife, it is not good to marry.

11 But he said unto them, All *men* cannot receive this saying, save *they* to whom it is given.

12 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from *their* mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to[a] receive *it*, let him receive *it*.

13 ¶ Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put *his* hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them.

a 1 Cor. 7. 32; Rev. 14. 4.

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the bond too strict, which was indissoluble. They saw many cases of weak, quarrelsome, barren women, marriage with whom they imagined would be too great an evil to endure. Unless such could be put away, then they would esteem that state of life to be an evil. But Christians see better, that even in such cases, the Christian may be sanctified by the virtues of endurance under any afflictions.

11. *This saying.* That is, that it is good not to marry. Of course some may do so. The Church of Rome, with a suicidal folly, has determined that all men who serve at her altars, *shall* receive this saying. She pretends to decide by ordination, who are those who can bear it, and the results show her mistake of the text. There are always men who have this peculiar gift, and always peculiar work for them to do. Universities, learned bodies, and missions; especially those to dangerous points (see the case of Henry Martyn), should be supplied with a body of single men. Often, too, the Church may act powerfully on the world by a body of men, like the ancient prophets—standing out from the world, and evidently self-denying in all things. St. Paul was the example for all such. 1 Cor. vii. 1, 7, 9. Let them however not dishonor that which is "honorable in all." Heb. xiii. 4.

12. These are persons unable or unwilling to marry. It seems here to mean, such as make choice of the chastity of a single life. There are three ways in which this pure and most heavenly grace (Rev. xiv. 4.) is gained,

1. By the happiness of a sweetly tempered natural constitution, as in that eminent saint, Archbishop Leighton. 2. By a violent and wicked maiming of the body, in which case, the peculiar grace of God is prepared to temper the affliction. 3. By a voluntary subduing of the natural inclinations, and embracing a life of toil and self-denial for the sake of the Church; a path of difficulty in which some may walk on earth, leading to great rewards in heaven. See v. 29. After these sanctions in regard to the family relationship, follows, naturally, a blessing upon the infant members of families.

13. *Then were brought, &c.* See Mark x. 13–16; Luke xviii. 15–17. They did not bring them to be cured of any disease, but to receive *a spiritual blessing*, which they believed would result from His putting His hands on them with prayer. This was taught them by the ancient custom of the laying on of hands. Gen. xlviii. 14; 2 Kings v. 11; Matt. ix. 18. They knew also from the fact of the admission of their children at eight days old, into all the privileges of covenant with God, that children could receive a covenant blessing. Christian baptism was not in being until the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. Acts ix. 2, 3. Therefore infants were not baptized till after that event. We find here the first foundation of the rite, in the giving a *spiritual gift* to infants. See note, ch. xviii. 3. ¶ *The disciples rebuked them.* Rebuked the parents. The disciples made the same mistake, as some few do now, thinking that there

14 But Jesus said, [a]Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

[a] Ch. 18. 3.

was no place in the Church for little children. Jesus was *much displeased* with the disciples, for He meant, and by His guidance of the Holy Church has effected it, that infants shall be received into His covenant of grace, equally with adults.

14. *Suffer little children, &c.* This is in general terms, in order to make it a perpetual law of His Kingdom. He does not say, "suffer *these* children, for it is pious in *these* parents to bring them, and it will do no harm for Me to pray over them:" but He announces in general terms a *charter and law of privilege* for all time, which must endure in all generations, inasmuch as the reason of it always holds good. His Church is always composed *of such.* ¶ *For of such, &c.* First, of such literally, little children is the Church always largely composed. Secondly, by inference, of such figuratively, that is, of persons docile and innocent as these infants. While this reason holds good, that is for ever, the Church must, in the way of infant baptism, suffer little children to be brought to Christ. For, 1. The whole authority of the Church from the first ages has so decided, which (ch. xviii. 18–20) is able to decide a matter of this kind. The Apostles baptized whole families, *as families*, on the profession of faith of the head. Acts xvi. 15, 33; 1 Cor. vii. 14. 2. The testimony of the Church from the earliest times is in favor of infant baptism. "The ancients looked upon this text, as a sufficient ground for it, as appears even from Tertullian, whilst he shows his dislike of the custom" (being at that time in error).—*Dr. Whitby.* 3. The reason of the Church of all ages has acquiesced in it, as a proper deduction from this text, and from all Catholic doctrine. In fact, the cavils made against the practice by some, are not so much to be answered by arguments on this subject, as by showing that they have lost the body of true divinity—even as one would not pretend to argue on every custom of our nation, with one who refused to believe the foundation doctrine of our constitution, that men have a right to govern themselves. They who receive the sound circle of Catholic doctrine, feel no difficulty with customs which are legitimate effects of it. Infant baptism rests on the great law of nature, that God does not mean men to be sinners, before they *can* be saints, lost in order that He may find them, but intends that from their first breath, they may be "in a state of salvation," i. e. of *salvability*, in which they may be saved, if they will. Therefore the Church is not troubled to prove the propriety of her use of this Charter in the Form of infant baptism; but bids them be brought to the "Ambassadors of Christ," who "speak in His stead," as soon as "the first or second Sunday after their birth," "unless on a *great* and reasonable cause," the parents are prevented. She reads over them this authority, saying, "Beloved, ye hear in this Gospel the express words of our Saviour Christ—ye perceive how by His outward gesture, &c. Doubt ye not, therefore, but *earnestly believe* that He will likewise favorably receive *this present* infant, that He will embrace him in the arms of His mercy," &c., &c. "*See exhortation in Bap. Office.* Only those who have eaten the bitter fruits of sectarian errors, will be *prevented* from receiving the truth. We do not fear but that children are truly received by Christ, and if they die as infants after baptism, they are assuredly saved. The Article asserts to the world with a confidence in the just inference of this practice; that "The baptism of young children is in any wise to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ." *Art. XXVII.* The Church meantime teaches her children to say: "In baptism, I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven."

15 And he laid *his* hands on them, and departed thence.

16 ¶ And behold, [a]one came and said unto him, Good Master,

a Mark 10. 17, &c.; Lu. 18. 18, &c.

what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life ?[b]

17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is*

b John 4. 36; Rom. 6. 23.

She bids her clergy and parents to seek that they, by prayer and education, "being steadfast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in charity, may so pass the waves of this troublesome world, that they may *finally* come to the land of everlasting life. See note, ch. iii. 11. She leaves the inference from Scripture to be made by the powerful impulses of parental affection. And surely, to a Christian parent, nothing short of an absolute forbiddal should keep them away from the Font with their little ones. Alas for a Church that has no mercy for babes. Mothers at least should feel that it has not in this respect "the spirit of Christ."

15. *And He laid, &c.* St. Mark adds, "and blessed them." This can by no means be held an idle wish or prayer which failed of its end, but a blessing *in them*, of all the little innocents on whom His ministers have since poured the waters of the baptismal tide. Thus Jacob (Gen. xlviii. 20), and Moses (Deut. xxxiii. 1), *blessed*, not more the persons present than all those who would inherit the blessing from them. The patriarchs were blessed as types and representatives of their children and tribes. And we must go to their acts, to understand the true meaning of the wish of the mothers, and the blessing of Jesus. If the Jew would feel that the blessing of his progenitors and fathers "prevailed unto the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills," surely we may believe that the blessing of the Saviour was of greater force and wider reach and endurance than theirs.

16. *One came, &c.* As our Lord has just declared how one may be received into the Church in infancy, so now He showeth what is necessary in grown persons, that they may become as little children. This young man was a *ruler*, and came *running* and fell on his knees, in his zeal and anxiety to find some better way to be saved. That he was in some measure sincere and worthy is shown by what St. Mark says, "And Jesus beholding him *loved him*." This He could not be said to have done, had the young man been a hypocrite. The ruler was self-deceived and self-righteous, but surely *not* that wicked character, a hypocrite. The whole story teaches us that even the *very best* man has need to give up *self* and follow Christ, in order to be saved. ¶ *Good Master.* Good Teacher. This title admitted that Jesus taught the divine truth. If so, then He could not be a deceiver. If so again, He, who taught as Jesus did, that He was the Son of God, the Messiah, was something more than a *good master*. The young man wanted *faith*. He knew the law. He knew the prophets. He knew all that Jesus claimed to be. He believes Him in part, but he is a afraid to go too far, and he *compromises* on the title, Good Master. Beggars, spirits, and others hailed Him as *Son of David*. Had the young ruler been consistent, he would have used some such title. He had probably debated with himself how to address Jesus, and finally fell on this as *safest*. This compromise with his convictions was wrong, and our Lord at once exposes it. ¶ *What good thing shall I do?* "It appears to have been dictated by a sincere and anxious wish to be instructed in the way to that everlasting life, which he found Jesus held out to his disciples."—*Bp. Porteus.* ¶ *May have eternal life.* These words, like those in the catechism, "inheritor of the kingdom of heaven," mean to have a right hope of being saved. A right hope, is one which is begotten of the promises and institutions of religion, founded on Christ and Him only, and proved sound by a holy life. *To inherit* is to receive by right of family relation. In the language of Scripture,

none good but one, *that is* God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.[a]

18 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,

19 Honour thy father and *thy* mother: and, [b]Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

20 The young man saith unto

a Lev. 18. 5; Neh. 9. 29; Ezek. 20. 11, 13.

b Lev. 19. 18; Ch. 22. 39.

it means to receive as the result of being children of God by adoption.

17. *Why callest thou Me good?* Jesus means to show the young ruler that He has penetrated into the secret of his speaking to Him by such an address. "You call Me *good*.—It is an attribute of God. How can I be *good* and with all My claims to Divine power and majesty, not be something more than a *Teacher?* You have compromised with the real conviction of your conscience, in not saluting Me as the Messiah—the Son of God." Says Dr. Whitby, "Thou oughtest to believe that I am more than human, and that the Divine nature dwelleth in Me, if thou conceivest this title truly to belong to Me, since 'there is none good but One, that is God.'" ¶ *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.* This was the Jewish covenant. Lev. xviii. 5; Neh. ix. 29; Ezek. xx. 11–13. God offered salvation to the Jews on condition of perfect obedience to the commandments usually called the Law, of which the Ten Commandments were the chief articles. Therefore our Lord refers the ruler to that covenant, to find an entrance into heaven. If he obeyed it, he would be safe. The young man wanted that deep insight into his heart, to see what troubled him. He did not see but that he had kept the Law; why was he not at peace? Jesus shows him. How clearly is the doctrine established that we are pardoned *not for any merit of our own.* "We are accounted righteous before God ONLY for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith; and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification." *Article XI.* This article is explained by the Homily of Salvation; in which we learn that the words "*faith only,*" are intended to exclude all *human* merit in the business of salvation; but by no means to exclude the necessity of good works, or a holy and pious life.

18, 19. *Jesus said, &c.* For the duties which are required by the commandments, see the admirable answer of the catechism to the question, "What is thy duty toward thy neighbor?' As we can be more certain of duties done to our neighbor, because they are acts seen and known of all, and duties done to God consist chiefly of *feelings* of love, and spiritual obedience; so the Saviour cites the Second Table of the law, as that which proves, as by signs and fruits, the right observance of the First Table. "And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also." 1 John iv. 20, 21; ii. 9. "Christ hereby declares that the laws of God are the very way which leads to everlasting life, and not the traditions and laws of men. So that this is to be taken for a most true lesson taught by Christ's own mouth, that the *works of the moral commandments, of God, are the very true works of faith which lead to the blessed life to come.*"—*Church Homilies.* ¶ *Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.* This is a summary of the rest, and of equal authority. It is found Lev. xix. 18. See also Matt. xxii. 39.

20. *All these have I kept, &c.* He was sincere, for "Jesus beholding loved him," which could not have been, had it been a falsehood. The young man had kept the *letter of the law.* He had not stolen, coveted, murdered, nor borne false witness. He was to worldly eyes

him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be [a]perfect, go *and* sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come *and* [b]follow me.

22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

a 1 Tim. 6. 18, 19; Gen. 12. 1.

b John 12. 26.

a pure character, and in this purity there is that which Jesus loved. But what lacked he? He knew not the strict requirement of the *spirit of the law*, the utter *unselfishness* of the Christian. He felt a *lack*. He felt that God would not receive him only for such a service. He is therefore the very instance to come in here, after the admission of little children to a blessing, to show that all men must cast away all trust in themselves, and all merits of their works, and trust as totally to Christ for pardon, and be as humble as a little child. How gently, yet effectually, does Jesus show him his lack; that under the garment of a fair literal obedience the *heart* in him had been unsubdued, and enslaved to the good things of this life. Love is the fulfilling of the law, but the fulfilling of the law in its letter only, is not love. He must now do the same letter, but with another spirit, and begin his duty by *denying himself*.

21. *If thou wilt be perfect.* If thou wilt be truly perfect, as Noah, as Job. See Gen. vi. 9; Job i. 1. The original word means, that which is complete, that degree of piety which is possible here. In the epistles it is applied to the full-grown Christian. "Let us therefore as many as be perfect, be thus minded." Phil. iii. 15. By this, St. Paul means that there were such Christians as for their consistency and *finished* character were as full-grown men, able "to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." So Heb. v. 14. "But strong mea belongeth to them *of full age*," that is, *perfect*, for it is this same word. See also 1 Cor. xiv. 20, in which the same word is translated *men*. Eph. iv, 13; Col. i. 28; iv. 12; James iii. 2. See note ch. v. 48. The young man desired this perfection. "One thing," said our Lord, "thou lackest of the obedience which will give you eternal life. To be really an inheritor of it, as a complete and consistent child of God, deny yourself and take up this cross." Complete perfection as an ideal is impossible. 1 John i. 8, 9. See *Art. XI.* of *XXXIX Arts.* But consistency and freedom from all *gross* and *deliberate* wilful sins is possible and necessary. 1 John iii. 5, 6, 9, 10. We need these *perfect*, these finished gems and heroes of the Christian Church, who may show us how high and glorious is the attainment of grace, when it is made the whole business of the life. ¶ *Go and sell all, &c.* "You have called Me Good Master; come and follow Me, in humility, and heaven is yours." Jesus did not choose that one of His disciples should come among the rest, separated from them by great wealth. Therefore He offers this young ruler the *great* privilege (for it says He loved him), of being one in His apostolic band, one perhaps to fill the future vacancy of Judas, or to be as Paul, an Apostle to the Gentiles. Would that it had been so. But the ruler's claim to merit vanishes. He sees his heart enslaved to the riches of the world. This same demand to sell all, &c., may not be pressed now as a rule of the Church upon any, since the whole case is changed with us; but it were earnestly to be desired, that many whom wealth has cherished into a surfeit and almost spiritual apoplexy, would seek for true life and health, by a *depletion* of this kind. There is too much or this young man's love of money in the Church.

22. *But when, &c.* "The young man made no reply; indeed he could

23 ¶ Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, that [a]a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

25 When his disciples heard *it*, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?

26 But Jesus beheld *them*, and said unto them, With men this is[b]

[a] 1 Tim. 6. 9. 10; Jas. 5. 1–5.

[b] Ps. 62. 11; 1 Kings 8. 39; 1 Chron. 28. 9.

not. He saw all his pretensions to perfection, his hopes of extraordinary reward vanish at once; he was not disposed to purchase even treasures in heaven at the price of all he possessed on earth. He therefore went away silent and sorrowful, for he had large possessions."—*Bp. Porteus.*

23. *A rich man, &c.* St. Mark explains it, one "that *trusteth in* riches." This is the sad moral of the preceding story. Alas! that so many of the amiable and beloved young people of this day, are not willing to give up that trust in the world. The rich are *hardly* or with difficulty saved, because their possessions tempt them to ease and worldly pride.

24. *It is easier, &c.* This is a proverb, to express the greatest improbability. If taken literally, it is utterly impossible for a camel to go through a needle's eye; so then a minister's duty would be, to see that no member of the Church owned more than a competency. But we are to understand proverbs according to the spirit and custom of the language. This implies that it would be very difficult for the rich to humble themselves to the lowliness of the Church of Christ. It was particularly true of those times. James ii. 6, 7. ¶ *A camel.* It was the *largest* animal known to the Jews. The imagination is pleased with this improbability of ideas; the largest animal trying to go through the smallest eye of the needle. It expresses that which is most difficult. ¶ *A rich man.* "Although these expressions of our Lord allude in their primary sense to the difficulty of embracing the Gospel in His time, and apply properly to those who trust in riches: yet to all rich men in general, they hold out this most important admonition; that their situation is at best a situation of difficulty and danger; that their riches furnish them with so many temptations to intemperance, pride, forgetfulness of God, and contempt of every thing serious and sacred; that they have peculiar need to take heed to their ways, to keep their hearts with all diligence, and above all, to implore that assistance from above, which may enable them to overcome the world, and all the enemies with whom they have to contend."—*Bp. Porteus.*

25, 26. *Who then can be saved?* "What rich man can receive the Gospel and be saved?"—*Bp. Pearce.* Or may it not mean, "Who at all can be saved, by Thy temporal kingdom, if Thou declinest the aid of the rich and powerful? How are we to get on with our cause? If the great and wealthy do not join us, who will? They control the poor, and have all power in the things of the world. How then can the kingdom spread among men?" They had no idea as yet, 'that God had chosen the weak things of this world and the things that are not, to confound the mighty.' 1 Cor. i. 26, 27. ¶ *He beheld them.* He looked earnestly at them. "With men this is impossible. You cannot see how My kingdom will spread without the rich, and how the rich must give up their riches, as I have called on this young ruler to do, in order to enter that kingdom: yet God has a way and means of carrying on both, without the aid of riches. With Him even this, to you contradictory conduct, will effect His glory and your salvation." We may suppose that this event began to open the eyes of *Judas* to the fact, that he had mistaken his calling, and would never become rich in following One, who would have the young ruler to sacrifice his station and wealth.

impossible, but with God all things are possible.

27 ¶ Then answered Peter, and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken [a] all, and followed thee, what shall we have therefore?

28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye

[a] Phil 3. 8.

28. *In the regeneration.* Παλιγγενεσια. New birth, or new generation. This word is used only once more in the New Testament, "the washing of regeneration." Titus iii. 5. It is evident that it there refers to the spiritual element of baptism. See notes ch. xviii. 3; John iii 5. The meaning here is doubted. We mention two interpretations of this passage, the first supported by good authorities, the last only suggested. 1. The regeneration, or *new-generation*, is thought to mean the times of the future resurrection of all men; the day of judgment and recompense, when all good men shall be raised with new powers to spiritual existence. Then Jesus will sit upon the throne of His glory. The apostles will be present as in a manner judges. They have here on earth preached the terms of salvation by which men will be judged. Their dignity in that New Jerusalem will be such as may be well pictured to the mind by the princes or judges of the twelve tribes. Rev. xxi. 14. Then all who have suffered here with Christ will reign with Him and receive an hundredfold, even an "exceeding and eternal weight of glory." And in that crisis and last judgment, many who *have been first* in privilege and in time upon earth will receive the smallest reward and will be last in honor in heaven. This explanation has been supported by excellent authorities, and has a beauty and consistency which commends it to every mind. But, 2. We suggest another. The *regeneration* may be used in harmony with its meaning in Titus, supposing, as we must, that that spiritual change, called the *new birth*, is a law belonging *solely and entirely to the Christian Church.* See *additional note*, end of this chapter. The text in Titus shows regeneration to be a law following Christ's atonement; a result of His Incarnation, by which this spiritual change is different in kind from all the faith and holiness of ages before Christ. 2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15; Rom. viii. 14–16; John iii. 7, 8. The regeneration, then, is the time or era *after the Descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost*, which was the true epoch of the beginning of the kingdom of Christ: all that happened before being a preparation for it. Acts i. 5; ii. 4. In Acts xi. 15, St. Peter speaks of that Pentecost as "at the beginning." The regeneration is therefore *the times of the Church*, when the law of the *new birth* is the law of its increase, when all men shall be in Christ "new creatures," or a new creation, i. e. a *re-* or new generation, when old things are passed away, and all things have become new. In those times the Son of Man shall sit (shall continue to sit) on the throne of His glory, at the right hand of God. Mark xvi. 19; Heb. i. 3; viii. 1; Rev. iii. 21. Note that the Apostles are not promised *thrones of glory*, but simply *thrones.* And do they not judge the Church? The idea was not revealed at the time when this was spoken, that the Gentiles would be brought in and the Jews rejected. Therefore the Christian Church is represented, under the figure of the Jewish, by the twelve tribes of Israel. The Apostles are the judges and rulers of it. During their lives they arranged its laws and practices, and now, by their inspired writings, they govern its members, as infallible and honored judges of truth and doctrine. In the Church every one receives that which is "great gain," namely, *godliness*, also the *earnest of the Spirit*, the gifts of true happiness and peace, which reward them a *hundredfold* for all they must give up. And in the Church they do properly "inherit," not receive, but expect, as heirs do, *a future possession*, "inherit eternal life." See Mark x. 17. Again, in the Church the law holds good that

which have followed me in the regeneration,[a] when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

29 And every [b]one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

30 But many *that are* [c]first shall be last, and the last *shall be* first.

a Tit. 3. 5. *b* Mark 10. 29, 30 Lu. 18. 29, 30. *c* Chs. 20. 16, 21. 31; Jas. 2. 5.

those who are first and chiefest in the possession and love of dignity, wealth, honor and worldly esteem, are last in the enjoyment of grace; while they who are poor, unlearned and unknown men, and withal humble, are first in the reception of honor and grace from God. Therefore the young ruler ought to have given up his wealth for such a kingdom: therefore the disciples may well have pondered the words, at which they had been so much surprised, that the rich would not be needed in the propagation of the Church. Why may not this latter explanation be the *direct meaning*, the other the secondary meaning of this passage? Both are true in the facts on which they are built.

20. *Shall inherit everlasting life.* To inherit is to receive by right from an ancestor, and usually applies to one *who has a claim by expectation, of something future.* To inherit everlasting life is to have, not the actual possession, but the expectation of receiving eternal life, as a result of the life now led: to be *heirs* of God by faith and obedience. Christians are inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. Gal. iii. 9. This word and its cognate words, inherit, inheritance, heirs, are found in the New Testament forty-eight times. In most or all of them, it refers to the *earnest of the Spirit, the promise* of future life which is enjoyed here. Lu. x. 25; xviii. 18; 1 Cor. vi. 10; Ro. viii. 17. An exception in Matt. xxv. 34.

30. *But many, &c.* Many now first in the eyes of the world, or *first* in hearing the offers of the grace of God, many of great esteem and rank in the Church here, shall be last in the kingdom of God; either not receiving it for want of faith, or appearing very inferior to others who were of less esteem here. "Many of the Jews, to whom the blessings of the kingdom are first to be offered, shall be the last to partake of them; and many of the Gentiles, to whom they are to be offered after the Jews, shall first enjoy them."—*Dr. Whitby.* This verse is closely connected to the next chapter. The parable (see ch. xx. 16) is an explanation of its meaning.

ADDITIONAL NOTE.

From verse 27 to the end, this passage forms the holy Gospel for the Festival of the Conversion of St. Paul, January 25th. This fact is a valuable hint to us of the true understanding of it, being in every sense an illustration of the law of the Church, that neither the time of one's call, nor any other *accident* should prevent a man from reaching its highest honors and rewards. St. Paul, or as he was first called, Saul, was born at Tarsus, in Cilicia. He enjoyed the rights of a Roman citizen; was educated first at Tarsus, and afterwards by Rabbi Gamaliel at Jerusalem. He joined the Pharisees, and espoused their strictest opinions. His biography is better known after his remarkable conversion, than that of any of the Apostles, being recorded by his friend St. Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles, and in parts by his own fourteen epistles. Both accounts leave him in the city of Rome, a prisoner, and "about to be offered." He is believed to have died in consequence of the conversion, by his means, of several ladies of the Imperial family of Nero. He is said to have been beheaded (by right of his Roman citizenship): whence the pictures of him represent him with a sword in his hand. The Collect, as also the name

of this Feast, teach us to study the Conversion of St. Paul, "that we, having his wonderful Conversion in remembrance, may show forth our thankfulness unto God." Saul, the learned Jew and persecuting Pharisee, was near Damascus, on his way to injure the Christian Church, when he was struck blind by a light from heaven, heard Jesus rebuking his zeal, and was sent into the city to wait for a message from the Christians he had come to destroy. This was his *conversion*. For he changed (by the grace of God) from that moment. He prayed and fasted, and saw the vision of Ananias coming to him to restore him to sight. Ananias, a minister beyond doubt, came, restored him to sight, bade him "arise, and be baptized, and *wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord*" (Acts xxii. 16), and "be filled with the Holy Ghost." Acts ix. 17, 18. This was his *regeneration* or *new birth*. It happened three days after his conversion, wonderfully making him the perpetual example of the proper distinction between the two. We must remember these facts, in order to understand rightly, and "follow the holy doctrine which he taught."

ADDITIONAL NOTE.

The learned Bishop Bull asks this question: "Whether the Holy Spirit was given to men in the times of the Old Testament dispensation?" and answers: "Certainly, by all means; otherwise we should not find so many pious and holy men under the Mosaic covenant. But 1st. The Spirit was given to men *under* the law, not (*ex lege*) *from* the law. It was a gospel grace. Hence the promised Spirit is called by St. Paul 'the blessing of Abraham,' not of Moses (Gal. iii. 14), because this great blessing was bestowed on account of the promise to Abraham, not from the Mosaic covenant, i. e. from the gospel, not the law. 2d. It was granted with this difference. Under the covenant of the Law, the Lord gave this grace (parce admodum ac restricta) in small and moderate measures; but under the gospel largely and abundantly. In gospel times, God is said to pour out His Spirit 'without measure' (John iii. 34), first upon Christ, then upon the Church, His body. Titus iii. 6; John vii. 38, 39; Acts ii. 17; also John i. 16. Some one may here *object*, that some men lived under the law who were adorned with gifts of the Holy Ghost to such a degree, that few or none under the gospel can be compared with them; for instance, Moses, David, and all the prophets. I reply, 1. The number of such men was very small. We seek for the *general* rule to all men, not to a few. 2. There were *very many* holy men under the gospel covenant, who were equal in the gifts of the Holy Ghost and sanctity,—yea, and far superior to the few saints mentioned under the law. In this number were the Apostles and most of the primitive Christians. 3. No grace of the Holy Spirit was given to those Old Testament saints which does not smack, in some respect, of an obscure age and an infantile condition. Hence the best prophets are ranked by Christ himself, as inferior to (postponuntur) the 'least in the kingdom of heaven' (Matt. xi. 11): inferior, that is, in the clearness and abundance of revealed knowledge of the liberation of the race from sin; for that mystery only began to appear in the time of John. But after the Passion and Resurrection of Christ, and the descent of the Holy Spirit, it shone clearer than the noonday sun. Compare Matt. xiii. 17, and 1 Pet. i. 10, 11, 12. 3. Although the Holy Ghost was granted under the law to certain men, yet after the Gospel was once completed and offered to mankind, the same Spirit was no more given to those who held to the law alone; but it was the privilege of such only as, having left the Mosaic covenant, exercised faith in the Gospel. The Holy Dove left the Ark of Moses, and fixed its abode in the Church of Christ—in the spirit of the law, not the letter, which was dead. A clear proof that this was done, was seen when the Holy Ghost transferred its gifts from the Synagogue to the Church, on the day of Pentecost, when it abode on the Apostles, and then upon the great body of Christians.—*See Har.* chap. xi. §§ 4–7. Also in his *Apologia pro Har.* §

CHAPTER XX.

FOR the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.

4, he discusses the difference between grace *before* and *after* regeneration, speaking as follows: "All the acts of the soul of man before regeneration are included by the sacred Scriptures under the words *faith* and *repentance*. These acts do not proceed from the mere powers of the human will acting by itself, but they are done by the Holy Ghost, preventing, exciting, assisting and attending, but not as yet *inhabiting* (in ipso homine habitantem). They are wrought *in man and by him*, through the grace of God; not in a moment, which is impossible; nor by necessity or *irresistibly*, as some say; but gradually, and according as the man yields himself to obey the guidance of the Word and Holy Spirit. To a man thus disposed, the great benefit of forgiveness of sins, or justification, and a title to eternal life is granted. And on the man justified (demum in hominem jam justificatum), the blessing of *Adoption to Sonship* is bestowed; that is, the 'spirit of adoption.' Gal. iv. 6. This gift of the Spirit which follows justification differs from the grace of the same Spirit given before conversion in two important respects. 1st. That the Divine Spirit is united more closely and intimately with the soul when purged from its old sins than it was before; it penetrates more deeply into it, and more entirely pervades all it faculties. Wherefore the Holy Spirit is said in Scripture, before a man's conversion, *to knock, as it were, at the door of his heart*, but after conversion, to enter into the secret places of the dwelling. Rev. iii. 30. Again, the most Holy Spirit, which by prevenient grace had before, as it were, only visited and prepared the soul for its coming, now inhabits it (habitat), and fixes its abode there, no more to depart, unless violently driven forth by some grievous sin; and even then willing to return, if it be recalled by an earnest and timely repentance. These are no new doctrines, but the very truth most manifestly delivered to us in the sacred Scriptures. Those Scriptures do every where and in the plainest words put the gift of the Holy Spirit as following *after and upon* faith and repentance. They clearly teach, that that Holy Spirit can be infused only into minds which are already properly disposed and made ready for it; at the same time that they attribute the previous faith and repentance in unmistakeable terms *to divine grace*. I beseech the reader not to pass over this distinction lightly, but to read with serious and close attention, the following passages of Scripture; Prov. i. 23; Isa. lvii. 15; lvi. 1, 2; Luke xi. 9, 13; John xiv. 17, 23; Acts ii. 38; v. 32; Gal. iii. 14; Eph. i. 13; 1 Pet. v. 5; Rev. iii. 20. Compare them with John vi. 44; Acts xvi. 14; Eph. ii. 8; 2 Tim. ii. 25. Also Acts ii. 16–21; Heb. viii. 9–13." The learned reader will perceive that we have rather given the sense of Bishop Bull's words than followed their exact order. They are his opinions on a subject of vast importance in this age. Would that Churchmen, ministers especially, could be induced to study carefully both of his invaluable treatises of the subject of Justification. This note, taken from them, is added in connection with the subject of regeneration in the preceding chapter, in hopes of inducing the reader to pause and impress on his mind the important distinctions between the times and circumstances of men *before* and *after* the descent of the Holy Spirit; as also the time before conversion, or man's work in justification, God assisting him, and the after-work of God alone, called *regeneration*. From this one centre flow most of the disputes of the day. From confusion here there will result constant confusion and difficulty in the interpretation of the Scriptures. May God grant that our work be not done in vain.

CHAPTER XX.

1. *For*. This parable is in explanation of the last words of the last chapter.

2 And when he had agreed with the labourers for a ‖penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the market-place,

‖ *The Roman penny is the 8th part of an oz. which after 5s. the oz. is 7d. half penny.*

4 And said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way.

5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.

6 And about the eleventh hour

It explains the law of the Church, that God would not so much regard the privileges of the Jews, nor the riches of the powerful, as the industry and zeal of His people. It is very differently explained by different persons, but seems most appropriate to the great fact of Scripture, that *God is no respecter of persons in the gifts of honors in his Church.* The awards of it are given not by accidental circumstances, as wealth or a priority of time. The disciples had no idea of this, but were expecting great honors from their having been the *first* called. ¶ *A householder.* The owner of fields who had need of many laborers. ¶ *His vineyard.* A plantation of vines, hedged in by walls, ditched, cleared of stones and cultivated. See ch. xxi. 33. There were many vineyards in Judea. The figure of a vineyard to express the Church of the Jews, on which Jehovah had bestowed the same care which a vinedresser would on his vines, is very common in the Old Testament. Is. v. 7; Jer. xii. 10.

2. *A penny.* A denarius, of about 15 cents value. This seems to us a small sum for a day's wages. Tacitus mentions it as common wages among the Romans. See Tobit v. 14. When labor and provisions were equally cheap, it may have been a liberal pay for the day.

3, 4. *The third hour.* The Jews divided the day into twelve equal parts, beginning at sunrise. John xi. 9. These parts were longer in summer than in winter, as the days were then nearly four hours and a half longer. Their nights they divided in the same manner. Both were then divided into four parts each. Of the night, see Mark xiii. 35. The days were distinguished by the third hour (nine o'clock), the sixth (noon), the ninth (three afternoon), and sunset. ¶ *Standing idle in the market-place.* Morier describes a scene in the market-place of Hamadan in Persia: "Here we observed every morning before the sun rose, that a numerous band of peasants were collected, with spades in their hands, waiting to be hired for the day to work in the surrounding fields. The custom struck me as a most happy illustration of our Saviour's parable, particularly when passing by the same place late in the day, we found others standing idle and remembered His words —'Why stand ye here all the day idle?' for, on putting the same question to them, they answered, 'Because no man hath hired us.'"

6. *The eleventh hour.* At five P. M., one hour before the day ended. This hour became injuriously used to signify *a late repentance,* as if God would encourage men to defer the duty of obedience to Him. The hours of the day refer to the *Eras* of the Covenants: of the Jewish and Christian Churches. The eleventh hour struck at the crucifixion. 1 John ii. 18. "We are none of us in the case of those who had never been hired, or had never had any call: we have been hired or listed into God's service from the time of our baptism, and have had repeated calls and invitations all our lives long. Still it is better to begin at the eleventh hour, than never to begin at all: and God *may accept it even then,* making merciful allowances for what is past, if care be taken to do it with sincerity and zeal, and with proportionable sorrow and contrition for the time mis-

he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?

7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, *that* shall ye receive.

8 So when even[a] was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them *their* hire, beginning from the last unto the first.

9 And when they came that *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny.

10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny.

11 And when they had received *it*, they murmured against the good man of the house,

12 Saying, These last ‖have wrought *but* one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.

13 But he answered one of

a Job 7. 2; Jas. 5. 4; Tobit 4. 14.

‖ Or, *have continued one hour only.*

spent in vanity."—*Dr. Waterland.* It may be said of this call at the eleventh hour, as also of the call to the dying thief, it was *made but once.*

8. *Call the laborers, &c.* In bidding his steward to pay the laborers, the householder acted according to the Jewish law: "At his day thou shalt give him his hire, neither shall the sun go down upon it, for he is poor and setteth his heart upon it." Deut. xxiv. 15; Lev. xix. 13. Christ is the steward set over the house of God, to order all things and give all their wages. Heb. iii. 6; John v. 27; Matt. xi. 27. "Here is encouragement for those that have delayed to enter on God's service till late in their lives,—not encouragement to delay, for we everywhere find in Scripture a blessing on early piety,—but encouragement *now* to work heartily and with their might."—*Trench.*

9. *Every man a penny.* Confessedly they did not deserve it; no such agreement had been made: and there is a law of propriety among men, that the due pro rata of wages to the labor done shall be preserved. But how exquisitely does this, which a man in common life would *not* do, teach us that there is no such thing as *merit* in human works. It is all of grace. Rom. iv. 1–4.

10. *But when the first came.* St. Peter had already asked in the last chapter, verse 27th, "And what shall *we* have therefore?" *i. e.*, we who have forsaken all and followed You. He is now answered—You will receive the same "regeneration," or admission into the Church and its hopes: the *denarius*, or day's wages for the day's living.

11. *Murmured.* This circumstance shows clearly that the parable does not end with heaven, for there none will murmur. But in receiving the Gentiles into the Church, there were murmurings. St. Peter was compelled, by the strange miracles of the gift of tongues appearing before baptism, to admit that the Gentiles *could* be received to equal privileges with the Jews. Acts x. 44, 45; xi. 16, 18.

12. *Heat of the day.* "The dry, burning east wind, so fatal to all vegetable life—the wind from the wilderness. Hosea xiii. 15. It has much in common with, though it has not altogether so malignant a character as the desert wind Sam, or Samiel, to which modern travellers attribute yet more destructive effects." It is a fit image of the "fiery trials" of the first times of the Church.

13. *Friend.* Companion; something nearer to the original meaning of the word *fellow.* It is used four times: ch. xi. 16; here; to the man not having the wedding garment, ch. xxii. 12; and to

them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny?

14 Take *that* thine *is*, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee.

15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? is thine eye evil because I am good?

16 [a]So the last shall be first, and the first last: for [b]many be called, but few chosen.

17 ¶ And Jesus going up to

a Ch. 19. 30.

b Ch. 22. 14; 1 Pet. 2. 9; Rev. 7. 14.

Judas when betraying Jesus. Ch. xxvi. 50.

15. *Is it not, &c.?* He justifies his manner of dealing with them. That he had given the others their daily bread was no injury to them. One instance of this kind is recorded by the historian Josephus. The high priest Ananus, or Annas, paid the workmen who were employed on the temple a whole day's pay, even though they should have *labored only one hour*. It was sacred work. So these laborers had not been idle from choice, and the householder gives them therefore their *living*, as if they had worked. ¶ *Is thine eye evil?* Envy is spoken of as dwelling in the eye, and giving to it a malignant power. Deut. xv. 9; Prov. xxviii. 2; Mark vii. 22. "Are you wronged, when you receive your dues, because I choose to be generous to others?"

16. *So the last, &c.* See note ch. xix. 30. ¶ *For many be called, but few chosen.* Many are called by the offer of free salvation, even all who hear it, but few listen and make themselves fit to be received. Many enter the vineyard, but do not labor. Many remain there, who are not chosen to higher honors and means of usefulness. Many who, fainting by the way, are not chosen at last. The true notion of election is evident. Mr. Barnes denies that it teaches "the doctrine of election." Yet it is certain, that the word *chosen*, used here for the first time, has in it that idea of election, which should be carried out into all the Scriptures; namely, that all men who hear the Gospel are the called. Only they who listen to the call, are received by baptism with faith and prayer, work in the vineyard, and obey the covenant of grace, see ch. vii. 24, are the chosen. The idea and proof of election rest only on the evidence of a faithful life, according to the last section of the *XVIIth Article*. "Furthermore, we must receive God's promises in such wise as they be generally set forth in Holy Scripture: and in our doings, that will of God is to be followed, which we have expressly declared unto us in the Word of God." Taking the promises thus from Scripture, we can found our idea of election only on a life so led. Says *Archbishop Sharp:* "By the elect are meant all those persons in a nation *which are in covenant with God, and do own His religion;* and in this sense the whole people of the Jews are several times in the Old Testament called God's elect; and in the New Testament, all that embraced Christ's religion, are likewise called by the same name. Both all the Jews and all the Christians are in Scripture styled God's elect; that is, in their several turns, they were chosen by God for his peculiar people, though yet among those there were abundance of wicked men and reprobates."

17–19. See also Mark x. 32–34; Luke xviii. 31–33. *Going up to Jerusalem.* This was in December, and the feast of the Dedication was near. Jesus leaves the region beyond Jordan, and goes up to the temple. He had left Galilee finally, and does not wander again far from the city where He was to be crucified. Now, for the third time He warns His disciples of His approaching death. Each time His language is clearer and more exact, yet in every case the disciples fail to understand Him. Says Dr. Jarvis: "It is a record for our admonition of the influence in the human mind of the *will* over the *understanding*. They were unwilling

Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them,

18 Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto[a] the chief priests, and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death,

19 And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify *him*: and the third day he shall rise again.

20 ¶ Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children, with her sons, worshipping *him*, and desiring a certain thing of him.

21 And he said unto her, What

a Chs. 16. 21; 17. 22, 23.

to believe, and therefore could not comprehend." It shows us also that the disciples had not yet that insight in the doctrines of grace, that true humility and unselfishness, which only the Spirit of God can give to the regenerate.

18. St. Mark says, "Jesus went before them, and they were amazed, and as they followed they were afraid." The signs of enmity against Him began to thicken. The Pharisees were trying to destroy him. He had left Jerusalem to avoid them. Now they see Him going back, and warning them that it was to contempt and death. His words should have satisfied them that His sufferings were voluntary, and that the rising from the dead, whatever it might mean, would be some glorious change. But "they understood none of these things, and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken." ¶ *Shall be betrayed.* See note chap. xvii. 22. ¶ *Chief priests and scribes.* The Sanhedrim. He was betrayed into their hands by Judas. Ch. xxvi. 15. They would *condemn* Him to death, but could not inflict it. Had *they* put Him to death, it would have been by stoning, on a charge of blasphemy. Acts vii. 57, 58. It seems strange that the disciples asked no questions on these points. ¶ *To the Gentiles.* This was an unheard-of cruelty that the Jews should give up a prophet to Gentiles whom they hated. Yet they were to deliver Jesus to Pontius Pilate and the Roman soldiers. ¶ *To mock.* To treat with derision. The Eastern nations have a singular power of this kind, and great sensitiveness to such contempt. Judges xvi. 25; Jer. xxxviii. 19. ¶ *To scourge.* A cruel punishment of which whipping is a very mild definition. It was a terrible laceration by the severest thongs that could be devised, and inflicted only upon the lowest criminals. ¶ *To crucify Him.* To nail and suspend Him to a wooden cross until He died. This was a Roman punishment for slaves. St. Luke adds, "spitefully entreated and spitted upon." Thus did the blessed Lamb of God go up meekly to take up His cross, that He might reconcile us to God. Let us bear patiently our little crosses for His sake Who endured such contradiction of sinners for ours. ¶ *The third day, &c.* As if the picture was too dark for them to look at, Jesus tells also of the Resurrection. This was to keep them from total despair, when they should see all the other parts of His prophecy accomplished.

20. See Mark x. 35–45. *The mother, &c.* Salome. She was in some manner attached with other women to the company of the disciples in some of their journeys, as we find her one of those who "were last at the cross and earliest at the grave." Mark xv. 40; xvi. 1. St. Mark says that her sons joined in this request. They were eager to be first in obtaining a promise. Possibly they regarded the prophecy of Jesus as intimations indirectly given of a crisis coming on this visit to the Holy City, which He had communicated in this manner to try their courage and fidelity. ¶ *Worshipping.* Kneeling. See note chs. viii. 2, and xviii. 26.

wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the [a]cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the [b]baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

23 And he saith unto them,[c] Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but, to

a Ch. 26. 39; Ps. 11. 6; Is. 51. 17. *b* Lu. 12. 50; Ps. 42. 7; 69. 2.

c Acts 12. 2; Rev. 1. 9.

21. *Grant, &c.* "Pass by the others, and exalt these two disciples to the highest honor in the palaces of Jerusalem. Let one be prime minister to rule the state: the other chief favorite to share all thy private thoughts. Let James, the Boanerges, or son of thunder, flash like a meteor in splendor over thy kingdom, and the gentler John be thy bosom friend." The vision of the Transfiguration still lingered with the two disciples, and this is their explanation of it. Thus they understood the words "He shall rise again." The seats she asked implied the chief honor and dominion, according to the notions of her people. 1 Kings ii. 19; Ps. cx. 1. There was, with all this evil ambition, true natural affection in the two brothers towards the Master.

22. *Ye know not what ye ask.* That they did not, one thought of their after histories will show. How gentle and loving is this answer. It must be that Jesus saw under the veil of their request, so offensive to the others, a spring of true affection, and dealt gently with them. A Christian in view of this should pray, "Grant us what is good for us, and what is not, refuse, although we ask it." ¶ *To drink of the cup.* The Jews described abstract things by images taken from the senses. They denoted affliction and punishment by a cup of bitter ingredients, maddening and horrible to drink. Ps. xi. 6; lxxv. 8; Is. li. 17; Jer. xxv. 15. This was well known to James and John, and we must understand them as consenting to brave all the bitter of their Master's lot. He often spake of His passion under this image. John xviii. 11; Matt. xxvi. 39. ¶ *The baptism, &c.* He paints by another striking word His coming sorrows, as if great waves of the sea burying Him, in their confusion and uproar, as if He were to be drowned in a terrible baptism in them. So David, Ps. xlii. 7; lxix. 2. See Luke xii. 50. And what can so powerfully teach us the agonies of the soul of Jesus, yielding to the tremendous tides of human sin, passion, hate, and rage, and sinking alone, out of sight, in the gloomy waves of death.

23. *Ye shall drink, &c.* "This much I can grant you, in consistency with the covenant made with the Father: ye shall be purified and made like Me; ye shall be brought near to Me, by walking the path which I shall walk, and be "made perfect by suffering." Heb. ii. 10. James was beheaded by Herod at an early date. Acts xii. 2. John was scourged and imprisoned by the Sanhedrim. Acts v. 21, 40. And though the account of his torture by immersion in a cauldron of boiling oil is questioned by some, it is certain that he was banished to Patmos, whence he signs himself a "companion in tribulation" and "patience." Rev. i. 9. ¶ *Is not mine to give.* The words in *italics* are better left out, as they rather clog the sense of readers at this day. "It is not Mine to give except to those, &c." They plead for these honors on the ground of *affection.* Jesus tells them that He cannot give them by any *partial affection,* but only by strict equity. He gave them the privilege of winning them through much tribulation. But in the covenant made with the Father there could be no respect of persons. As man, He felt human relations and affections, but the Son of God could have no *will* but that of the Supreme. *Those for whom it is prepared* are those

sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared of my Father.

24 And when the ten heard *it*, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.

25 But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Ye [a]know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

26 But it shall not be so [b]among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto,

a Lu. 22. 25, 26.

b 1 Pet. 5. 3.

who have followed most closely His steps here, and by sufferings have been made humble and patient, meek and strong to bear and do for the good of the Church. Those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, the martyrs, and patient sufferers, will walk with Him in white, for they are worthy.

24. *The ten, &c.* The other disciples, John and James being excepted. They felt indignant and angry, at what they considered an unworthy attempt to deprive them of their rights. They were all present when the request was made. Often Christians grow angry and grieve much for losses as *imaginary* as this proved to be.

25, 27. *But Jesus called, &c.* He rebuked them for this anger, and again taught them of His spiritual kingdom. It was of a totally different kind from that of temporal kingdoms. In the latter the rulers exercised dominion at their will. He was fitting them for His. They would yet live by a different rule, and find their greatest pleasure in forgetfulness of *self*. Humility is the law of Christ's Church. They who are first in their own esteem are the least in it. ¶ *Gentiles.* This word commonly denotes the persons who are not Jews; but also, as it does here, *all nations.* ¶ *Minister.* Diaconos, a servant. The same word Deacon has come to have a more confined meaning, for the third or lowest order of the ministry. In its general sense it signifies simply service of any kind rendered by one to a superior. It is certain that the mere names of the offices of the ministry were not so important in early times, as some would make them now. The orders were so entirely distinct *facts*, that each superior order could use without confusion the titles of the inferior. Hence the term *servant, deacon*, is used of the whole ministry, (1 Cor. iv. 1), of apostles, (1 Cor. iii. 5; Col. i. 23), of the Saviour (Gal. ii. 17), and in its proper sense (in which serving of tables had no part) of the third order of deacons proper. Phil. i. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 8.

28. *Even as the Son of man, &c.* See note ch. viii. 20. How could men see the Saviour's example so long, and not see the carnal motions of their own hearts? Jesus *served* the poorest and meanest of men. He gave up time, convenience, every thing to the sick and poor. He took no reward. Even they themselves, what right had they to claim that He should have chosen them, if He wished for earthly power? He bore all things in meekness and poverty. Yet they were bent only on becoming rich and great. Such is the unregenerate heart of man; filled with the things of this earth, it is blind to true wisdom. ¶ *A ransom for many.* A ransom is a payment made for a captive. In ancient times captives in war were carried away by the conqueror, were made slaves, and often cruelly treated. There was no release, no return to the homes which they had lost. Now and then, some one was fortunate enough to be redeemed by his friends, by the payment of a sum of money. The Jews had a vivid im-

but to minister,[a] and to give his life a ransom[b] for many.

29 And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him.

30 And behold, two blind men

a Phil. 5. 7.

b Is. 53. 5, 8, 11; Dan. 9. 24; 1 Tim. 2. 6; Tit. 2. 14; Heb. 9. 28.

pression of the meaning of the word. They had been slaves in Egypt, had been captives in Babylon for seventy years. And in the frequent wars of the age of the Saviour, they saw many instances of the inexpressible benefit and blessing which lay in the word, a *ransom*. In our Lord's use of it, the reader will see the deepest wisdom and truth. Man was the slave of sin. He was laden with the burdens of it; sin and misery here in this life, death at the end, and a second death beyond. There was none to pity. Then came the Son of God in the likeness of man, and gave Himself a ransom for many. He has done that mysterious, unspeakable thing, a gift to us, a Covenant with the Father, which is only feebly pictured in all the words which we can use. He has redeemed us and reconciled us to God, has cast up a highway to heaven, has quickened the pulses of man's sick heart, has infused a spiritual nature, has washed, sanctified, and will justify him, has encouraged him by faith, love and hope, and given him the ineffable gift which lies in the words "God worketh in you to will and to do of His own good pleasure." Phil. ii. 12, 13. The child now may learn the words, ransom, redemption, reconciliation, faith in the cross, and all the blessed phrases of Scripture, may enter on the devotions of Passion Week, in which the history of our Lord's suffering for our salvation is had in remembrance in all the world. But even that noble mind and intellect of St. Paul was compelled to pause, even as the child, who stands astonished at the first sight of the ocean, and say, in view of this plan of Redemption, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" Ro. xi. 33. The ransom is for *many*, that is, free to all who will receive it. See ch. xxvi. 28; 1 Tim. ii. 6; 2 Cor. v. 14; Heb. ii. 9. This doctrine is called *the atonement*, that is, the reconciling or making at-one, God who was angry with us for sin, and man, who was alienated from God by wicked works. See a few texts upon it. John iii. 16; i. 29; 1 John iv. 10; 1 Pet. i. 18, 19; Eph. i. 18, to end; ii. 1–9, 16; v. 2; Heb. ix. 28. See *Article II.* and *III.* of the *XXXIX. Articles of Religion.*

29. See Mark x. 46–52; Luke xviii. 35 to xix. 1. *Jericho.* This was the second city of Palestine in size and splendor. It was situated on the west bank of the Jordan, about two miles from it, and about seventeen miles east-north-east of Jerusalem. It lay in the route from the "region beyond Jordan." It was in the track of the children of Israel, when they entered the holy land, and was the first city captured by them. Josh. vi. 20, 26. On this occasion Joshua pronounced a curse against any who should undertake to rebuild the city on the same site. It seems that a new city was built at some distance from the ruins of the ancient one. No one dared to rebuild the ancient city, till five hundred years afterwards, when the curse was literally fulfilled. 1 Kings xvi. 34. The new city became the school of Prophets under Elijah, and was blessed by a signal miracle. 2 Kings ii. 21. After that event it flourished. It is a place of great beauty and fertility. The climate is mild in winter, so that Josephus called it a *heavenly country*. It is now a small, poor village called *Riha*. ¶ *As they departed from Jericho.* St. Luke says, "as He was come nigh unto Jericho." This *seems* to us a difficulty, and is an instance how apt wicked men are to cavil at a seeming difficulty. The proof that it is only *seeming*, must be that in the times when all the facts were familiar to most readers of the Gospel, no one found

sitting by the way-side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *thou* son of David.

31 And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *thou* son of David.

32 And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I should do unto you?

33 They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.

34 So Jesus had compassion *on them*, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

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fault with it. It is one of those passages which we at this late day may safely leave to the wisdom and good faith of early Christians, since we know the difficulty would have been certainly raised against them, or been noticed by them if it was one. But all knew the facts, of the situation of Jericho, the force of the words, &c., and all received the two accounts as stating the truth. Dr. M'Knight ingeniously reconciles the two accounts by referring to *the two towns*, the old and the new. Jesus passed through one (which was in ruins) and was entering the other. This may have been so. Dr. Jarvis makes this note on it: "I see not why we may not argue from analogy (of Luke xvii. 11) that as St. Luke says in the one case, "as He was come nigh unto Jericho," meaning that "He came to Jericho and went out of it," so in the other, "as He went to Jerusalem," may mean "during the journey to and from Jerusalem." Jesus probably remained in Jericho over a Sabbath, and entered and left the gates more than once. Our explanations at this day, must all end in suppositions. It puts the truth on a surer basis to leave it to the good faith of the primitive Christians.

30. *Two blind men.* One of them was Bar-Timaeus, a man so well known, in Jericho at least, that St. Mark and St. Luke mention him only. But the mention of one does not exclude another. St. Matthew tells us that there was another to share the blessing. It was usual for the poor to take their station at the gates of a town, in order to obtain the alms of the pious. ¶ *Heard that Jesus passed by.* Being blind they could only know by inquiring of others. There was an unusual crowd of people passing out of the gate. One and another speak of this great Prophet. Seeing Him on the way to Jerusalem, they would question concerning Him, with some excitement. The blind men startle the crowd with the loud confession of the true faith, which perhaps the others dared not utter: "Thou Son of David"—Messiah and Prince of the nation. See note, ch. i. 1.

32–34. *Their eyes received sight.* The miracle is done in a *marked* manner, to prove the truth of their confession. Theirs was a new and bold expression of faith. These blind men had been cut off from their kind. They had been *lonely beggars*. They had heard of Jesus of Nazareth; they found Him nigh. They had meditated on His miracles, from a *different* point from the multitude, that is, from the point of one ardently wishing a blessing. They wished to see. Now a desperate courage seizes them. What care they of the crowd's rebuke. That crowd had despised them. That crowd could not make them see, and He who was passing *could*, and if He could, they knew enough of the cold and heartless world to dare to tell out what every man in that crowd felt to be the *truth*. "Lord, Son of David, hear the blind beggars and help us." Jesus calls them. And their *faith*, and its courageous confession, is that which "saves them," that is, "*made them whole.*" On a similar occasion, which is detailed at length by St. John (ch. ix.) *the reasonings* of a blind man are given. The noblest profession of a true faith in Christ which had yet startled the Jewish ears, came from these sightless beggars, on the wayside

CHAPTER XXI.

Palm Sunday, March 21.

Ex. xii. 2, 3. John xii. 1–19.

AND[a] when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come

a Mark 11. 1, &c.; Lu. 19. 29; John 12. 1, &c.

of the City of Palms. Satan's kingdom once more receives a downright blow from the visit to Jericho of this the true Joshua. ¶ *They followed Him.* Probably on His way up to Jerusalem to the feast of the Dedication. They swell His train as indisputable evidences that He had the powers of the Messiah —the Son of David.

Feast of St. James the Apostle.

The verses 20–28 of the above chapter are selected by the Church as suited to the Feast of St. James (July 25), who is mentioned in them. He is called the Great, the Elder, and the Apostle, to distinguish him from the celebrated Bishop of Jerusalem, James the Less. In Scripture St. John is always mentioned last, and sometimes as the brother of James, as if the latter were either older or better known. Mark iii. 17. He was the son of Zebedee and Mary Salome, a kinswoman of the blessed Virgin. He was at first a fisherman. He is known for his ambition, as recorded above, and for his indignation against the Samaritans. Luke ix. 55. He was favored as one of three to behold the resuscitation of the daughter of Jairus, the Transfiguration, and the sorrows of Gethsemane. He was affectionate, energetic and faithful by nature. His career as Apostle was brief. The Spaniards have a legend that he came and preached the Gospel in Spain. It is not likely that he left Judea, for he was put to death by Herod Agrippa, eight years after the Ascension. He early drank the cup of martyrdom, which Jesus had predicted of him. Whether he won the honored throne he desired or no, remains to be seen. The Collect has selected for our instruction the fact of his prompt obedience, that "he without delay was

to Bethphage unto the mount of Olives,[b] then sent Jesus two disciples,

2 Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass

b Zech. 14. 4.

obedient unto the calling" of the Lord Jesus, and bids us pray that we, "forsaking all worldly and carnal affections, may be ready to follow God's holy commandments." Thus he who was first called was soonest summoned to leave the vineyard for the rewards of eternal life.

CHAPTER XXI.

1. *And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem.* See also Mark xi. 1–10; Luke xix. 29–44: John xii. 12–19. St. Matthew takes less note of time in his narrative than of the order of subjects. The last chapter relates the events of December. True era, 33. We now come to March 22d, the Sunday of Passion Week, the last visit to the holy city. The events of this holy week are of such importance that they will be carefully noted in the order of time. They begin with Sunday, called by the Church for several centuries Palm Sunday, from the event related in verses 8–11, and from the practice of walking in procession with branches of trees, which were then placed in the churches. Sunday was not with the Jews a holy day, but answered to our Monday. Jesus had spent the Sabbath (Saturday) at Bethany, at the house of Lazarus (John xii. 9), and now approaches the holy city. St. Matthew relates the events of this first day as far as verse 17. The events to verse 20th, of the actual cursing of the fig-tree, happened on Monday. From thence to chapter xxvi., the writer relates what occurred on Tuesday. St. John (chaps. x. to xii. 12) records some events which St. Matthew has passed over. It was now five days before the Passover, the tenth of the month Nisan (Ex. xii. 3), the day on which the Passover lambs were driven into the city, to be kept there until Thursday. The true Lamb of God chooses it for His entrance,

tied, and a colt with her: loose *them*, and bring *them* unto me.

3 And if any *man* say aught unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.

4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was

to signify to us the great spiritual truths connected with that sacrifice. He was the true Lamb of the one great Passover. Rev. xiii. 8. ¶ *Were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives.* About one mile east from Jerusalem lay the ridge of the mount of Olives, so called from the great number of olive trees which grew upon it. Acts i. 12. In *leaving* the city a person must first pass across the valley of Jehoshaphat, called at its lower end the valley of Hinnom or Gehenna. See note ch. v. 25. Through it ran the brook Cedron. John xviii. 1. He then passed by the inclosure of Gethsemane (meaning the place of the *oil press*) which lay along the west side of the hill nearest the city. Ascending the mount of Olives he could look down on Jerusalem, and trace the buildings, and especially the edifices of the temple crowning mount Moriah. Passing over the hill or ridge, he first reached Bethphage on the eastern declivity, and farther still, or two miles from Jerusalem, the village of Bethany, from which the Saviour began this day's walk. The mount of Olives is about a mile in length from north to south, and with three peaks. The road to Bethany wound around near the middle one. The palm tree flourished on Olivet, whence the name Beth-any, the house of dates: and figs, whence the name Beth-phage, the house of figs. The oil of the olive was used in the rites of the temple, and typified our peace with God. Ex. xxx. 25–29. The people were accustomed to gathering the olive branches, as also the palm branches in the Feast of Tabernacles. Neh. viii. 15. Zechariah (ch. xiv. 4) had foretold this day's entrance into Jerusalem.

2. *Go into the village over against you.* Jesus was now two miles from Jerusalem, on the east side of Olivet. The village of Bethany was behind Him, and the village *over against*, or on the hill just before Him, was Bethphage. The roads were doubtless filled with people, crowding to the city, and driving thither the lambs for the approaching feast. ¶ *Ye shall find an ass tied, &c.* Jesus was to ride upon the colt, on which "never man sat." St. Mark and St. Luke mention only the colt, because on it this triumphal procession was made. The colt undoubtedly belonged to some one who knew Jesus, and freely consented to this use of the animal. The Jews were accustomed to use the ass for riding, as also the mule and camel. The horse was forbidden. Deut. xvii. 16. Kings and great men rode on the ass. It appears in the sublime visions of Jacob, in connection with these very events. Speaking of the Shiloh, he says: "Binding His foal unto the vine, and His ass's colt unto the choice vine; He washed His garments in wine, and His clothes in the blood of grapes." Gen. xlix. 11. See Is. lxiii. 1–3. Solomon, the peaceful monarch, a type of Christ, is described as riding on a mule. 1 Ki. i. 38. Our Lord, according to Jewish ideas, appeared in the proper state and dignity of the Prince of Peace.

3. *The Lord hath need of him. The Master*—Jesus. The word Lord sometimes meant master, as opposed to servant. Ch. x. 24. But in the words of Jesus himself, we may safely understand it to mean Lord Jehovah. See ch. xxii. 44. The Greek version of the Old Testament generally substituted the word κυριος, Lord, for the name of Jehovah. That it was given in the full sense of the Divine Majesty, is shown, 1st, by the fact that it has this force in His own mouth; 2d, that it has it in the language of His Apostles, Heb. i. 10; 3d, that God by His providence has preserved this doctrine in all the world, the which He would not have done, had it not been true. Our Lord on this day assumes the name of His dignity, as is shown to have been the opinion of the English translators, who printed the name with a

spoken by the prophet, saying,[a]

5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh[b] unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them.

7 And brought the ass and the colt, and put on them their clothes,[c] and they set *him* thereon.

8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches[d] from the trees, and strewed *them* in the way.

a Zech. 9. 9. *b* Is. 62. 11; John 12. 15. *c* 2 Kings 9. 13. *d* Lev. 23. 40.

capital letter. The Lord-Jehovah had need of the colt. He was wanted for a religious use. See 2 Sam. xxiv. 21, 22.

4, 5. *All this was done, &c.* See Zech. ix. 9. It was applied by the Jews to Messiah. Indeed, images of such beauty can befit no one else. ¶ *Daughter of Zion.* The Jewish nation. Zion (*i. e.*, the Sunny), was the southern hill on which the city of Jerusalem was built, containing the royal palace and the upper city. David took it, and dwelt in it, calling it the city of David. 2 Sam. v. 9. Solomon caused the ark to be carried thither. 1 Kings viii. 1. It was called Zion from the first. Daughters of Zion means the females of Jerusalem. Lu. xxiii. 28. But in the singular, it means the nation or church in covenant with God, and belonging to Him in the bonds of the tenderest love. Jer. vi. 2; Is. lxii. 11. ¶ *Meek.* See ch. v. 5. He came in *unwarlike* state, not as a conquering monarch, with battle array, on a fiery charger and armed with sword and spear, but as a Prince of Peace.

7. *And put on them their clothes.* Upon the colt. Luke xix. 35. This was done as a mark of respect. The crowd understood this action to symbolize that He was their king, for they had a case in point in their history, when the captains proclaimed Jehu king, and "put their garments under him." 2 Kings ix. 13.

8. *And a very great multitude.* The news spread. It had reached the city, and by the time that Jesus, riding in this manner, in the midst of the passing travellers, had come to Olivet, the citizens crowded out to meet Him. John xii. 12. They are ready to revolt and form a triumphal procession, hoping to see Him organize an army, for a glorious career of victory. It is plain that this day Jesus might by earthly means alone have triumphed over His foes. See John xii. 19. The disciples did not understand the spiritual meaning of these events till after Pentecost. John xii. 16. ¶ *Branches of trees, &c.* At the feast of Tabernacles (the Jewish Advent) the people carried branches in their hands, chanting sentences from the Messianic Psalms. See Ps. cxviii. 25, 26. They expressed in this manner their desire for the coming of the Messiah. Lev. xxiii. 40. They now by this action express the belief that Jesus is the Messiah. A similar custom is recorded by heathen writers. When Xerxes was about crossing the Hellespont, the soldiers went before him, strewing the way with myrtle branches. When Cato returned to Rome, "they laid their garments in the way," an honor, as Plutarch informs us, paid to a few emperors only. The tree which was here used (John xii. 13) was the *palm tree.* Its long branches were strictly used during the feast of Tabernacles. Lev. xxiii. 40. The learned Jos. Mede's opinion is, that this feast was affixed to the time of year when Christ was to be born, and the dwelling in tabernacles (i. e. huts made of branches of trees) was intended as a type of the Incarnation, as St. John intimates, ch. i. 14: "The Word was made flesh and *dwelt*" or *tabernacled* "among us." We find an event which throws light on this triumphal march, recorded 1 Maccabees xiii. 51; 2 Mac. x. 6, 7. Simon, the Jewish general, having starved the heathen out of the fortress on Mount

9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying,[a] Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.[b]

10 And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?

11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

12 ¶ And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all

a Ps. 118. 26; 100. 23, 39.

b John 12. 17, 19.

Zion, entered it in procession. The same was done by Maccabeus, on the feast of Tabernacles, in recovering a second time the temple and city. The events were fresh in the minds of the Jews. They well knew the meaning of their actions. St. John describes a scene in heaven similar to this same event, when "a great multitude," with white robes and *palm-branches* in their hands, shall stand before the throne and "before the Lamb," and rejoice in Him as King with a true spiritual worship, in the tabernacle not made with hands, eternal in heaven. Rev. vii. 9–12.

9. *Hosanna to the Son of David.* This shout bears some resemblance to that raised on the coronation scene of Solomon, the Son of David, 1 Kings i. 39: "All the people said, God save King Solomon." He was a type of Christ. *Hosanna* was a shout of prayerful joy, from two Hebrew words, meaning, Be now propitious—Save us now. It is found in Ps. cxviii. 25. ¶ *Son of David.* Messiah. See note, ch. i. 1. ¶ *Blessed is He, &c.* Ps. cxviii. 26. To come in the name of the Lord, was to come as His Ambassador.

The other Evangelists record other exclamations of the multitude. St. Mark says, that they cried "Blessed be the kingdom of our Father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord," i. e. "Blessed be the kingdom of Messiah, which was promised to David, our ancestor, and now begins in all the powers of the name of God." St. Luke adds: "Peace in heaven and good will to men." Luke xix. 23. This is a paraphrase of the angelic Gloria in Excelsis, by which the angels made known the Incarnation. With so many people crowding around the Saviour's path to Jerusalem, and up to the temple, there were of course many other tributes of praise, which have not been recorded.

10. *The whole city was moved.* The rulers were in great rage and fear. The crowd filled the city with their cry. Children raised it in the temple. The Pharisees were perplexed and feared for themselves, for they said, "the world is gone after Him." Some Greek Jews, who had come up to the Passover, find Philip, who was of Bethsaida, whom they knew, and beg to be shown the Saviour. John xii. 20.

12. See Luke xix. 45, 46. St. Mark also records this fact as occurring the next day. Mark xi. 15–17. It was probably done twice. ¶ *And Jesus went into the temple.* St. Mark says that He "came and *looked* upon all things and returned to Bethany." Jesus had entered the temple as a King. He exercises therefore an act of royal power. He came to worship, and after the usual morning prayers, He comes out into that part of the temple called the court of the Gentiles. It was outside the actual temple, though upon Mount Moriah, and surrounded by the temple wall. To show their contempt of the Gentiles, the rulers of the Jews (who would have died rather than allowed such a defilement of the temple itself) had given permission to the traders in animals, &c., for the sacred rites, to establish their market and money-tables in this outer court. The temple was a house of prayer *for all nations*, i. e., for the Gentiles as well as the Jews. This could not be true when the part of it which was set off for the nations, was occupied by brute beasts. Our Lord was indignant at this wickedness of the

them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers,[a] and the seats of them that sold doves,

[a] Deut. 14. 25.

Jews. As He stood and declared His power as Son of God, a voice, with the sound of thunder, was heard from heaven. John xii. 28, 29. Thereupon Jesus proceeded to purify the holy temple of God. THE TEMPLE. As this is the first time that St. Matthew records the actual presence of the Lord Jesus in the temple (see ch. iv. 5; xii. 5, 6), and this presence seems to have been foreseen by the prophet Haggai (ii. 3, 7, 9) as giving the second building a glory superior to the former temple of Solomon, it seems to be the most suitable place to describe briefly that celebrated House of Worship. The temple of Jehovah was built to be the place of His presence and worship, among His chosen people. It was built on the mount where Abraham offered up Isaac. Gen. xxii. 2, 9, 14. It was an enlarged copy in wood and stone of the tabernacle built by Moses. That tabernacle was built in all things *after the pattern showed to Moses*, when he was forty days in the mount with God. Ex. xxv. 40. It was made therefore by a certain law and rule to "serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things" (Heb. viii. 5), "a *figure* only for the time then present." Heb. ix. 9, 11, 23, 24. The Jewish rabbins taught that the chief intention of making the tabernacle and other things was, "that the people might have a book of wisdom to instruct them in *the things above* which they respected; and that when Moses made one tabernacle on earth, another was made by the angels in heaven." It was their opinion that the inner chamber or Holiest place, represented Heaven, where God dwells; the second or outer room, this visible world. Josephus says, "the second part of the tabernacle signified that earth in which men conversed, but the third part was appropriated to God, heaven being inaccessible to men." See Heb. ix. 8. It was therefore a type and symbol of the *Body of Christ*, in which for a while Jehovah tabernacled or dwelt with men. Heb. ix. 11; John ii. 19; Rev. xxi. 3. The tabernacle described Ex. xxv. was carried from place to place in the journeys of the Israelites. It was of an oblong shape, 30 cubits by 10, and 10 in height; a cubit being one foot nine inches. It was divided by curious veils of colored cloths into two chambers. The outer, into which the priests entered, was 20 cubits long by 10 broad. In it were kept the table of shew bread (see note ch. xii. 3), the golden candlesticks and the golden altar for incense. The most Holy place was separated from it by a veil, and was square, ten cubits on a side. Here was the Ark of the Covenant. Here dwelt in light inaccessible the Shechinah, the glorious presence of Jehovah. King David's pious design of building the temple was forbidden. He however provided incalculable treasures for his son, to aid him in building it. 1 Chron. xxii. 14–16. Solomon the wise, after three years preparation, began to build the temple on the threshing floor of Ornan on Mount Moriah. 1 Chron. xxi. 18, &c. B.C. 1025. Seven years and six months was he in completing it. 1 Kings v. vi. "It was exceeding magnifical, of fame and glory throughout all countries." 1 Chron. xxii. 5. It was burned by Nebuchadnezzar B. C. 586. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 19. After the captivity in Babylon, an inferior building was reared by Zerubbabel, 515 B. C. To console the older Jews who had seen the former building, Haggai (ch. ii.) was sent to them with the promise of a future glory, to adorn it, in the person of the Incarnate Son of God See Ezra iii. 8, 12. The second temple lacked the symbols of God's presence. It was often defiled by the impieties of wicked men, as Antiochus Epiphanes and Heliodorus. Herod the Great, to gain popularity with the Jewish nation, undertook to build a new temple; but being compelled to yield his first plan

to the suspicions of the people, was content with *repairing* the old building. This renovation was completed in forty and six years, at the *First Passover* of our Lord's ministry. Herod committed the care of the work to a thousand priests, with ten thousand men at their command. It was continued after his death. The improvements were such as greatly to beautify the building, and according to Josephus, the work of embellishing continued even after the death of Christ. It was finally destroyed by Titus, and in its destruction involved that of the city and nation.

The temple proper, as appears by the plate, was the oblong central building. The name was sometimes used in a general sense of all the sacred buildings. The area on which the temple was built was a square of 600 cubits. In the centre of this stood the temple proper, into which only the priests could enter. The Holy of Holies, or inner chamber, was 20 cubits square. In it was the ark of the covenant, including the tables of the law. Next came the Holy place, measuring 40 cubits by 20. Beyond this the porch measured 6 by 20. Before the porch stood the altar of burnt offerings. See note ch. v. 23. The worshippers could *see* the holy place when the veils were withdrawn, but not the Holiest, into which the High Priest alone went once a year. Into this court of Israel our Lord went to pray, but never into the temple itself, as he was not of the tribe of Levi. Around this inclosure was a wall six cubits high. Beyond this, by a descent of five steps, was the court of the women. This was the limit of the more sacred part of the temple. Josephus says that thus far it was called (ἅγιος) holy. No Jew would have tolerated the least impiety in any portion of it. Here it is probable that St. Paul was seized and accused of defiling the sacredness of the place by bringing in Gentiles. Acts xxi. 26–30. Then came a descent by 14 steps into the outer court, the court of the Gentiles, surrounded by a wall, and with piazzas and porticoes, where the people collected, and where animals and other things belonging to the sacrifices were bought and sold. It was from this place that our Lord drove the dealers in these things. On two sides of the temple the foundations were continued by arched vaults across ravines in the hills, so that the wall was in those parts several hundred feet high. See note ch. iv. 6. The colonnade on the east side was famed for its beauty, and called Solomon's Porch. Acts iii. 11. Chambers were arranged in the various walls of the temple for storing the sacred vessels, and for dwellings for the priests. The ascent to the sacred edifice was from the east, through the gates Nicanor and Shushan. It at one time surpassed all the buildings of the world for glory, and though at the time of our Saviour it had only the relics of its splendor, it deserved the admiration which the disciples expressed for it. If the temple of wood and stone was a work worthy of such care from the Almighty, we may believe that He still accepts honors paid to His name by Christians, who in later times seek to honor His holy name by building temples worthy of Him. The heart of man has still the same wants and laws, and still we may believe that wealth is well used when it is offered up in this way to God. 1 Chron. xxix. 16–19. And we may learn from the study of the spiritual meaning of the various parts of the temple, that our churches should be constructed with a wise care to the mute but profound lessons which architecture can convey. We see that the national character of the Jews was seriously affected and moulded to certain ideas of religion, which were first engraven on wood or stone, and by them in due time transferred to the heart. Finally, this earthly temple was the *image* and *symbol* of the heavenly. This does not mean, perhaps, that we are to expect the same *forms* in the latter as we read of in the former, but rather that we may receive from that ancient "shadow of good things to come," better than from other insensible objects, ths impressions and first small visions of those glories of the New Jerusalem which filled the Epistle

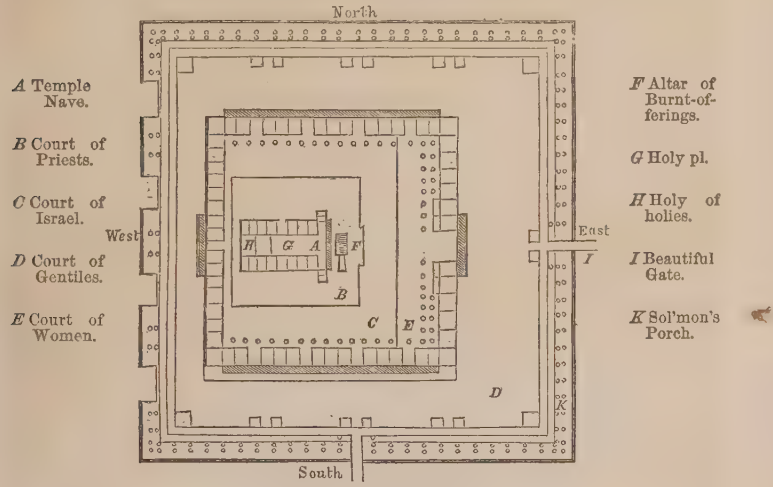
13 And said unto them, It [a]is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.[b]

[a] Is. 56. 7.

[b] Jer. 7. 11.

to the Hebrews and the Revelation of St. John with inspired eloquence. Heb. ix. 11–14; x. 19–22; Rev. xxi. 10–23.

12. *And cast out them that bought and sold in the temple.* These traffickers, with their cattle, were in the court of the



The Temple of the Christian Era.

Gentiles. It was allowed by the Jews, from a spirit of pride and carelessness, which had lost sight of the great truth, that the place was a symbol and witness of the Catholicity of their service. Mercy was offered to the Jews first, but even by their own laws, also to the Gentiles. They despised this provision. Jesus re-asserts it, and begins to break down the partition-wall by this attempt to restore to the Gentiles their right in the temple. Also, this traffic at the door of the temple, and the lowings and bleatings of the animals, were undoubtedly the cause of a great disturbance in the other courts of the temple. ¶ *The tables of the money-changers.* The only coin received in the sacred treasury was the Levitical shekel, or half-shekel. These money-changers were men who took pains to buy up all the legal coins, and sold them again to the Jews, who had come up to worship. It was likely that great corruption had crept into the trade. ¶ *Them that sold doves.* They were used in sacrifice by the poor. Lev. xiv. 22; Luke ii. 21. All animals for the sacrifices were, of course, sought for in the city by Jews, who came from any distance. St. Mark adds (xi. 16) that Jesus would not allow any man to carry any vessel through the temple. Does not this teach us that our blessed Saviour desires, that we show the same degree of reverence to His churches, which He demanded for that sacred temple? He was about to die, and would not be likely to do these acts, so much for the Jews as for Christians. And we ought to cultivate, by strict care, a proper respect for all things sacred, nor take our ease, consult our own pleasure, and do other things which show, that we do not recognize the sacredness of holy places.

13. *It is written, &c.* By Isaiah lvi. 7,

14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them.

15 And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased,

He had spoken this of the times of the Messiah. The latter words seem to have allusion to Jer. vii. 11. ¶ *House of prayer.* This describes by strict inference the true design of Christian churches. It is, in a word, the Lord's own canon and law, by which service in them is to be regulated. Jesus has called them houses of *prayer.* Prayer is their chief end. Prayer should be the chief duty practised in them. Prayer in public demands more care, order and beauty, than can be given to it if *extempore.* True, unpremeditated prayer is *rarely heard.* When it is thought to be practised, it is only a form varied in a narrow compass from the memory of the speaker: the same prayer, in substance, from year's end to year's end. Is it not better, then, to do a duty of this vast importance *well*, considering it is God that we pray to; remembering that He has once revealed to us that He was willing to be served by a well ordered liturgy; remembering that His Son our Lord, and the Apostles, used that liturgy so long as the temple was standing; that early Christians moulded their services with the greatest care; that the vast majority of Christians, whom we can hardly suppose to have erred in such a matter, have used a liturgy; knowing, also, that our Common Prayer is simple, Scriptural, and Catholic; and believing that even the angels around the throne of God do not fear to present to Him their best, and therefore the same liturgic praises; believing that we shall join in those songs of Moses and the Lamb, and not weary of their repetition? Is it not better for us to worship God in our *best thoughts*, rather than our *first* thoughts, in *order*, rather than carelessness, in the beauty of holiness, rather than in the off-hand, and often offensive manner which has become common with some! A house of prayer should have a due, well ordered form of prayer; and for that form to be useful, the people must feel that it is their best, that they must join in it lowly and reverently; that they must go prepared for it, and, first of all things, seek to pray with all their mind and soul. The day will come, when our prayers will be of more consolation to us than all the sermons we have heard, valuable as they may have been. For instruction is the work of others—prayer is our own work. It enters into us, becomes part of us, and being answered by grace from God, it purifies us, beautifies the soul, and prepares it for final justification. The above passage (verses 1–14) is used for the first Sunday of Advent, which begins the ecclesiastical year, and is always the Sunday nearest to St. Andrew's day, November 30. Advent means *the Coming*, and has two applications: 1, to the first coming of Christ in the flesh; 2, His future coming in glory. The present chapter relates that event of His life, which seems to look both ways. He came in humble state to Jerusalem, to finish His work as the Lamb which was to be offered for sin. He is yet to come, with the hosts of the redeemed shouting around Him, Hosanna! Blessed is He that cometh! Glory in the highest!

15, 16. *Hast perfected praise.* The rulers were angry and perplexed. They were angry with the innocent children, who have caught the echo of the shouts of their elders. The question "Hearest Thou what these say?" means, "Why do You not stop the mouths of these children? Why do *You*, a man of Galilee, allow them to proclaim You as Messiah?" They could not understand the spiritual meaning of Christ's actions. There He stood meek and lowly, only seeking to do good and heal the woes of men. He received the demonstrations of the mul-

16 And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea: have ye never read, [a]Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?

17 ¶ And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany, and he lodged there.

MONDAY, MARCH 22d.

18 Now in the morning, as he returned into the city, he hungered.

19 And when he saw a fig-tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig-tree withered away

TUESDAY, MARCH 23d.

20 [b]And when the disciples saw

[a] Ps. 8. 2.

[b] Mark 11. 20, &c.

titude, but showed no signs of any intention of seizing the supreme power, and setting the Jews free from the Romans. Jesus replies by a verse of the 8th Psalm. It is cited from the Septuagint. 'God accepts the praise of children; and shows His grace in a manner peculiarly condescending and perfect.'

"And if some tones be false or low,
What are all prayers beneath
But cries of babes, that cannot know
Half the deep thought they breathe?"

17. *Bethany.* See note ch. xxi. 1. The events related by St. John, ch. xii. 20–50, occurred on this same day. Sunday ends here. Concerning Monday little is said. St. Matthew relates only the event concerning the fig-tree not bearing fruit, and the disciples see the tree withered the following day. It was probably night, as they returned to Bethany on Monday evening, and they could not see it. We place the account of St. Mark ch. xi. 15–19, on this Monday.

19. *A fig-tree.* He saw it afar off. It stood alone by the road side, and was in a manner public property. Deut. xxiii. 24, 25. It was in full leaf, but as He came nearer He found no fruit thereon. Our Lord of course knew that there was no fruit there. He came to it, in order to make it a *parable* of a great truth, which was important at that time. In Palestine the fig-tree put out its fruit first, afterwards the leaves. By the time therefore that the tree is in full foliage, the fruit ought to be ripe. And so luxuriant and prolific is the fig-tree, that it is a rare thing to find one barren. This one was therefore an exception; a monstrous perversion of the laws of its kind. It deceived the eye, was to all appearance fruitful, but only cumbered the ground. The Jewish nation was like this fig-tree. It luxuriated in all the outward forms of holiness. The Lord had come to it, seeking fruit; He found no true love for Him. Therefore He speaks a malediction on the tree, not from any ill will to it for not bearing fruit, since it had no choice in the case; *but as a parable* acted before the disciples, to impress on their memories, in the most striking manner, *the destiny of the city of Jerusalem.* That was to wither away and be destroyed suddenly, as by a portentous curse from God. ¶ *And presently the fig-tree withered away.* Not at the word, but by the next day. Perhaps it began to wither at once. It is sometimes made a subject of idle cavil that our Lord should have destroyed this tree. Such persons overlook entirely the *moral* contained in the action. For surely no sensible man can regret the loss of a common fruit-tree, uninclosed by the way side, in a country where they were abundant, if by its loss important spiritual truth is conveyed. Our Lord was Creator of all things, and possessed unlimited right over all. He suffers a tree to die, meaning by it to show the far more disastrous

it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig-tree withered away!

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you,[a] If ye have faith and doubt not, ye shall not only do this *which is done* to the fig-tree, but also, if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the, sea it shall be done.[b]

22 And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

23 ¶ And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority[c] doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?

24 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which, if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things.[d]

25 The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?

26 But if we shall say, Of men;

a Ch. 17. 20; Jas. 1. 6; 1 Cor. 13. 2. *b* Ch. 7. 7; Jas. 5. 16; 1 John 3. 22, & 5. 14.

c Acts 4. 7; & 7. 27; Heb. 5. 4. *d* John 10. 25. 37; & 8. 18.

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fall of a nation. It is a rule of human reason that examples may be made for instruction, upon worthless objects.

20. TUESDAY. *And when the disciples saw it.* They spent the night at Bethany, and are again returning, when they discover and remark on the destruction of the fig-tree. They *marvelled* at it, and (St. Mark xi. 21) St. Peter called our Saviour's attention to it, expressing his wonder.

21. *If ye have faith and doubt not, &c.* Why was this faith recommended at this time? Because they would need it most especially in the events of which that destruction of the fig-tree was the beginning and type. They would need faith before the week had passed. ¶ *Say unto this mountain.* See note ch. xvii. 20. There was a faith exercised by the Apostles, called faith of miracles, which is commonly expressed by this form of words. Ch. xvii. 20; 1 Cor. xiii. 2. It may be taken in either of two senses. 1. Literal. 2. Spiritual. 1. A literal interpretation is a good one: for the faith that can do one miracle can as easily do another. To perform a miracle, a man must have a command or impulse from God. And certainly with such an impulse, it would matter little what was the form and extent of the miracle. 2. The faith which the Apostles would need, was more a spiritual faith, to remove the prejudices of men, and such a faith may well be *inferred* in this promise. They had that faith. Christians have it still, and are moving mountains of heathen prejudice in all lands.

22. *And all things, &c.* How does he turn from the dreary subject of a curse to whisper peace. This promise belonged to them in their ministry. They should have all things which they needed to confirm it. But as they stood for all Christian ministers and for all Christian Churches, so the promise, with reasonable limits, descends to us. If we ask believing that we receive, we may have blessings of the *richest* kind, because heavenly, holy, and eternal; the blessings of forgiveness and sanctity. 1 John iii. 22; v. 14. Others we have no need of, and so cannot ask for them *believing*.

23. *These things.* His public entry into Jerusalem, and His expulsion of the traders and brokers from the sacred edifice.

24, 25. *The baptism of John, whence was it?* There is an argument to refute the priests, or to satisfy them, if

we fear the people: for all hold John as a prophet.[a]

27 And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

28 ¶ But what think ye? A *certain* man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said,

a Ch. 14. 5.

Son, go work to-day in my vineyard.

29 He answered and said, I will not; but afterward he repented, and went.

30 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I *go*, sir; and went not.

31 Whether of them twain did

they desire it, in this question. It shows them from whence they should begin to trace the authority He used, namely, from the notorious and unmistakeable witness of John the Baptist. At the same time it makes their malice recoil on themselves. John was now dead, and the people reverenced him as a prophet. He had given testimony to Jesus, and therefore His authority must fall back on the baptism of John. If he had been a prophet, then Jesus was Messiah. ¶ *Why did ye not then believe him?* When he testified that Jesus was the Son of God. Ch. iii. 3.

26. *We fear the people.* They were in a dilemma. They dared not say what they knew to be true—that John was a prophet, from hatred of Jesus; nor what they would have said if they dared, that he was not a prophet, for fear of a commotion of the people against them.

27. *We cannot tell.* This was false. It is to be noticed that the rulers were deeply interested in *extorting* a direct answer to their question. They repeat it on the trial of Jesus, and the High Priest "adjures Him by the living God" to answer. Whereupon Jesus replies directly. It is made the *crime* for which they condemn Him to death. Ch. xxvi. 63–65. As His hour has not yet come, He avoids their malice. And their conduct shows the reasonableness of His not answering: for if they could not decide in a case so notoriously plain, as whether John was a Prophet, then of course they would not have been satisfied with any answer in His own case.

28. *A certain man, &c.* Jesus now turns upon them and lays bare the evil thoughts of their hearts by a series of parables. They had now in a measure set themselves in opposition to the common people. John vii. 49. Jesus first shows them that these common people, sinners as they were, will be saved before them. ¶ *Two sons.* One of these represents the rulers then present, the other the open sinners among the Jews. ¶ *Go and work.* This represents God the Father giving the Law. It was given either in the natural conscience or by the Law on Sinai. Both said to the Jews, go and work out the righteousness which I desire.

29, 31. *I will not.* He openly refused. These were open sinners, men who felt that they were doing wrong. Such were the publicans and harlots. ¶ *Repented.* Regretted his want of reverence to his parent and returned to his duty. The sinners, however, truly repented and changed to a better life. ¶ *The second.* The type of the Pharisees, who, by their professed obedience to the law, ought to have gone on to the spiritual understanding of it, and have been the first to welcome the message of John and obeyed Jesus. ¶ *They say unto, &c.* The answer is forced from them. They see the moral. ¶ *The publicans and harlots.* Many notorious sinners, alarmed by the preaching of John and the Lord Jesus, repented and were submitting to Him, while the Pharisees were plotting to kill Him. Often a profligate man is aroused and reformed by grace, and a moral one remains insensible. This does not make early piety the less valuable. It is to

the will of *his* father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans[a] and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

32 For John[b] came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen *it*, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.

33 ¶ Hear another parable; There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard,[c] and hedged it round about, and digged a wine-press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country:

a Lu. 7. 29, 37. *b* Lu. 1. 15, 17.

c Ps. 80. 9; Is. 5. 1, &c.; Jer. 2. 21; Mark 12. 1; Lu. 20. 9, &c.

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be doubted if the late conversion of a man can ever give him the proportion and harmony of piety, which early obedience bestows. A course of sin is not necessary to make better Christians. The Pharisees, with all their outward morals, were actually bold, hard sinners.

32. *John came in the way of righteousness.* John came as a Jew and a Prophet of the strictest, purest walk. He did the very righteousness which the law demanded, as Moses, Elias, and Isaiah had done before him. Yet though they could not object against him the slightest departure from the law, they did not regard him.

33. See Mark xii. 1–12; Luke xx. 9–19. *Hear another parable.* This one has as its chief point the future act of God in taking from the Jews their privileges and giving them equally to all nations: and this made necessary by their own sins and ingratitude. ¶ *Householder.* See note ch. xx. 1. ¶ *A vineyard.* See Deut. xxxii. 32; Is. v. 1–7. The vine is seen on coins of the Maccabees, representing Palestine. It was the most important fruit of Judea. See note ch. xx. 1. The vineyard represented the spiritual privilege or divine covenant which had been made with the Jewish people. It gave them the advantage of bearing "fruit unto holiness." It was to be taken from them and given to others. ¶ *Hedged it round.* They built hedges of the wild aloe and other thorny shrubs to keep out the foxes and wild hogs. The wall which enclosed the Jewish covenant, was the guard of precepts, which marked them out from all other nations. Ex. xxiii. 22; Numb. xxiii. 9; Eph. ii. 14. St. Ambrose says, "He guarded it on every side by a wall as it were of celestial precepts and the protection of angels." ¶ *A wine-press.* That is, *the vat* under the wine press. These vats were hollow places dug in the earth and lined with stone, or sometimes cut out of the solid rock. The grapes were placed on an open floor above them, and trodden by the feet of men, when the juice or must ran through and was collected in the vat. Judges ix. 27; Neh. xiii. 5. ¶ *A tower.* A high tower in the middle of the vineyard in which the keepers were to watch the vineyard at the season of the vintage. See Cant. i. 6; ii. 15. They are sometimes seen in the East now, and are about twenty feet square and fifty feet high. It is the custom of the Arabs, Hindoos and Spaniards to erect these towers for this same purpose. ¶ *To husbandmen.* These represent the Jewish rulers. It is the main design of the parable to let the rulers know that it was spoken "against them." God often speaks of a nation, from one generation to another, as *one* person, and represents the last as bearing the sins of all. Ch. xxiii. 36. Though in human codes the infidel principle is sometimes asserted, that "one generation cannot bind another," it is certainly excluded from the Divine legislation. "Remember not, Lord, our offences, nor the *offences of our forefathers!*"

34. *The time of fruit.* Vineyards were often let out in this manner.

34 And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.

35 [a]And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

36 Again he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.

37 But last of all, he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.

38 But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir[b]; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.

39 And they caught him, and cast *him* out of the vineyard, and slew *him*.

40 When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?

41 They say unto him, He [c]will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out *his* vineyard unto [d]other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

42 Jesus saith unto them, Did

a 2 Chron. 24. 21; & 36. 16; Neh. 9. 26; Ch. 5. 12; 23. 34-37; Acts 7. 52; 1 Thes. 2. 15; Heb. 11. 36, 37.

b Ps. 2. 8; Heb. 1. 2; Acts 4. 27. *c* Zech. 12. 2; Lu. 21. 24. *d* Acts 13. 46; & 18. 6; Rom. 11. 1-5.

After the fruit was ripe, or the wine made, the owner sent for his rent, which was paid *in kind*. Luke xvi. 6, 7. ¶ *His servants*. These are special messengers, the prophets, who came to the Israelites from time to time to recall them to the service of God. 2 Kings xvii. 13.

35. *And the husbandmen, &c.* The prophets were many of them martyrs. Jeremiah was stoned, Isaiah sawn asunder. See Heb. xi. 36; 1 Kings xix. 10; 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21; xxxvi. 16. ¶ *Stoned*. This was the legal punishment for blasphemy and impiety. Lev. xx. 2; xxiv. 16; Deut. xiii. 10. It was sometimes, it may be, resorted to by a mob without any particular idea of its meaning. How strange is human nature, that the crime which the prophets came to prevent should have been falsely laid to their charge. See Acts vii. 58; John viii. 59.

37. *Last of all*. "Having yet one son, His well-beloved." Mark xii. 6. This was the last resource, to try if any gratitude remained. It may be said that no man would act in this way. God has done it. His thoughts are not as our thoughts. Is. lv. 8. His mercy triumphs over all the sins of men, so long as there is left in them the heart to repent, and deserts them only when they have hardened their hearts beyond repentance.

38. *This is the heir*. See note ch. xix. 29. Here lies the force of the parable. Those wicked husbandmen, conspiring against the innocent heir, were a picture of the deep treachery which those, who were standing before Jesus, were meditating. John xi. 47–53. They were at that time desiring His destruction, in order that they might not be disturbed in their corrupt doctrines and practices.

39. *Cast Him out*. St. Mark and St. Luke are both particular to mention this incident. Our Lord "suffered without the gate." Heb. xiii. 12, 13; John xix. 17. According to their ideas this was an *excommunication* from the covenant. Naboth had illustrated this feature of the parable, having died for his *vineyard*, and died, too, by stoning, as if accursed, on a false charge of blasphemy, without the walls of the city. 1 Kings xxi. 13.

40, 41. *When the Lord, &c.* Our Saviour asks them the question in order to make them condemn themselves. The chief priests saw the drift of the parable (v. 45), and angry as they were at its conclusion, they were too wary

ye never read in the scriptures,[a] The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken[b] from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

44 And whosoever [c]shall fall on

a Ps. 118. 22; Is. 28. 16; Dan. 2. 44, 45; 1 Pet. 2. 6, 7.

b Ch. 8. 12. *c* Is. 8. 14, 15.

not to answer according to right, in presence of the people. Thus, they are effectually answered in their first question, concerning *the authority of Jesus*. He appears before them as the Son and heir of all things, against whom they were seeking a charge, when they asked the question. The parable has a close connection with the events of the succeeding days. They seek to draw from Jesus a claim to be the Son of God. On this claim the trial turns.

42, 43. *Jesus saith, &c.* Jesus confounds them with Scripture. The parable which He had used did not admit of one circumstance. In it the Son is killed, and cannot punish the husbandmen Himself. But in the history of God's dealings, Jesus the Son of God is to rise from the dead and inflict the punishment. He now represents Himself in this light of *punishing*. The *rejecting this stone* was done in casting out the Son and killing Him. Now the same Son, under the similitude of a stone, becomes the destruction of His enemies. ¶ *The stone, &c.* See Ps. cxviii. 23–25, and note verse 9. It is a figure taken from the choosing of stones for a building. Dan. ii. 45; Acts iv. 11; 1 Pet. ii. 7; Eph. ii. 20. The husbandmen have become the builders of the spiritual temple. They refuse to lay a foundation on faith in Christ. They reject Him, and hope to go on in their work without Him. ¶ *The head of the corner*. The corner-stone is the principal one in the foundation, and has been supposed to mean here the *keystone* of an arch, which holds up the whole. But it is more simple in the common sense, of the chief stone *at the angle* of a building. Christ is called so, because on Him rests, and in Him unites the old Covenant and the new; the Law and the Gospel. ¶ *The Lord's doing.* It was not the wish of the builders. They had no idea that in killing the Son of the Lord of the vineyard they were actually carrying out the Divine intention, and making Him by the very cross the cause of salvation to the Church. Acts iii. 17, 18; ii. 22–24. ¶ *Marvellous in our eyes.* It is beyond all human expectation. It is a mystery which was not then revealed to them, that even their act of mortal hatred would do more to destroy Judaism and establish the Church, than any thing else they had done. This language had in shadow applied first to David, but in substance only to the Saviour of mankind.

43. *The kingdom, &c.* This is one of the clearest prophecies of the change of covenant to be found in the Gospels. The kingdom of God, the vineyard, the corner-stone, all these represent our idea of the Gospel economy. It shall be taken from you. You shall no longer be the chosen people. It shall be preached freely to all nations, and your nation and church come to an end. This was done when the Apostles began to receive the Gentiles. ¶ *To another nation.* To another chosen people—the Church, collected from all nations. St. Peter, writing, as it were, a comment upon this same passage, concerning the building a spiritual temple upon the "living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious," calls the Church Catholic, "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." 1 Pet. ii. 4–10.

44. *And whosoever shall fall, &c.* A solemn warning to them to repent in time. There are two different actions here expressed: they who stumble at this corner-stone, and they who are finally crushed by it. Those fall on

this stone, shall be broken: but on whomsoever[a] it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder.

45 And when the chief priests and Pharasees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them.

46 But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because[b] they took him for a prophet.

a Dan. 2. 44. *b* Lu. 7. 16; John 7. 40.

this stone who stumble at the humility of Christ in His first advent. This the rulers had done, and they were broken. Their plans were disappointed; their prosperity at an end, and in a few years their city destroyed. But sad as this punishment is of "*being broken*," it allows a chance of repentance and escape from total destruction. The person is maimed, but not destroyed utterly. ¶ *On whomsoever it shall fall.* This allows no escape. It fell on the Jewish nation, at the fall of their city, and caused a ruin deplorable beyond all other similar events. Christ, the true Rock of Ages, now in a manner lies here below, fixed in the earth. Whoso is offended at His doctrine, must fail of life, and be disappointed in obtaining spiritual peace and rest. But hereafter He shall come down from heaven, and like a rock thrown from an immense height, will grind the wicked into powder; or, as Daniel hath it (ii. 35), "like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors," destroying them by a ruin utter, hopeless, and irreversible.

46. *They feared the multitude.* They saw the open break and hostility which now lay between them and the Messiah. They must now sin *wilfully* against the truth. They were beyond repentance. But their fury was restrained by fear of the people. The time of His deliverance into their hands was not yet come, and Jesus was still protected by the natural laws of Providence from heir violence.

CHAPTER XXII.

Passion Week—Tuesday.

AND Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said,

2 The kingdom[c] of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,[d]

3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to

c Lu. 14. 16. *d* Ps. 72. 1; Is. 62. 5; 2 Cor. 11. 2; Rev. 19; 7. 9.

CHAPTER XXII.

1. *Parables.* See note, ch. xiii. 3. The present parable is connected with the others, in the last chapter. It shadows forth the law of the kingdom of grace. It forecasts the fate of the Jews who reject the Son of God, and the doom of all who are at last found faithless. This is *not* the same as the parable in St. Luke's gospel (ch. xiv. 16), although resembling it in some points.

2. *The kingdom of heaven.* Note, ch. iii. 2. The Church is like the following story, in this respect, that God deals with unfaithful men in it as a certain king did with a contemptuous guest. The law of it is, that many are called to it, but only they who work out holiness can see the Lord in peace. The Jews boasted of their *birthright*, as making them peculiar favorites of heaven. They are now told that in the act of rejecting Christ, that birthright will cease, and individual character alone determine their final condition. ¶ *A marriage for his son.* Marriage feasts in the East are attended with prolonged ceremonies and great expense. The festivities often lasted from a week to fourteen days. Gen. xxix. 27; Judges xiv. 12. God is the King, who spreads the feast to His Son.

3. *And sent forth his servants.* These are prophets and ministers, who call men to enjoy the privileges of the Church and a hope of salvation. It was not uncommon for one giving a feast to send forth servants, at the time of it, to sum-

the wedding: and they would not come.

4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold I have prepared my dinner,[a] my oxen and *my* fatlings *are* killed, and all things *are* ready; come unto the marriage.

5 But they made light of *it*,[c] and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:

6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated *them* spitefully,[e] and slew[d] *them*.

7 But when the king heard *thereof*, he was wroth: and he sent forth his [e]armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.[f]

a Prov. 9. 1, 2; Zeph. 1. 7, 8. *b* Esth. 1. 12; Prov. 2. 24. *c* 1 Thes. 2. 15, Acts 5. 40; & 14. 5, 19.

d Acts 7. 58, 12. 3. *e* Dan. 9. 26; Matt. 26. 53. *f* Acts 13. 46.

mon those who had been before invited. Esther i. 3–9; v. 8; and vi. 14. ¶ *The wedding.* The word is in the plural, meaning all the rites and festivities attending a marriage. ¶ *They would not come.* They *rebelled.* Note, that it is not an equal, sending to ask his neighbors, or there would be no sin in the refusal; but it is a king, whose *will* is equivalent to a law, and refusal at once appears to be treason. Esther i. 12. The chief difficulty of sinful men, is, that they *will* not; for salvation is free. "Ye will not come unto Me, that ye might have life." John v. 40.

4. *Other servants.* As this was only a summons to those who had been invited before, it seems better to understand these servants to be all sent in the last age of the Jewish Church, from Christ's ministry to the destruction of Jerusalem. ¶ *Fatlings.* Animals fatted by stall-feeding them, i. e. the best of their kind. The king is patient. He thinks there may be error, and that they may yet be induced to come. The mercy of God faints not at one refusal. In the Church the invitation of grace is made freely to all men. Rev. xxii. 17.

5. *But they made light of it.* Treated it with contempt. Perhaps no men ever acted so foolishly to an earthly king, but they do so continually to the King of kings. The *unnaturalness* of this conduct heightens the guilt of those, who refuse to come when urged. This passage is used with a sad, tender eloquence by the Church in the second exhortation to the Holy Communion. "Ye know how grievous and unkind a thing it is, when a man hath prepared a rich feast, decked his table with all kinds of provision, so that there lacketh nothing but the guests to sit down: and yet they who are called (without any cause) most unthankfully refuse to come." And again, "which if ye shall neglect to do, consider with yourselves, how great is your ingratitude to God, and how sore punishment hangeth over your heads for the same, when ye wilfully abstain from the Lord's Table and separate from your brethren, who come to feed on the *banquet of that most heavenly food.*" ¶ *Merchandise.* Their business of buying and selling for gain. The blindness of men leads them to despise heaven for a few heaps of dust, and refuse celestial joys for the *cares* of business.

6. *And the remnant.* The smaller part. They represent the Jewish rulers, who were not content with showing contempt. They treated the messengers cruelly, and slew them, as for instance, St. Stephen the first martyr. We call such as die for the truth's sake, *martyrs*, from a word meaning witnesses, because they gave their testimony even unto death to the truth of what they had preached.

7. *Wroth.* Angry and indignant. This verse plainly refers to the time when our Saviour was speaking. It is

9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

10 So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both [a]bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.[b]

11 ¶ And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:[c]

12 And he saith unto him,

a Ch. 13. 47. *b* Zeph. 1. 12.

c Is. 61. 10; 2 Cor. 5. 3; Eph. 4. 24; Col. 3. 10, 12; Rev. 16. 15 & 19. 8.

a warning therefore to His hearers, the Jews, not to proceed in their sinful plots against the Lord of heaven and earth. ¶ *His armies.* God sent the Roman armies under Vespasian and Titus to punish the Jews, for all their crimes. They burned the city and destroyed an immense number of the inhabitants. The angels are also called His armies or hosts. They do His will in the regions above us, and often complete, what seems to the natural eye to be done by men alone. 2 Kings vi. 17; Rev. xix. 14.

8. *Not worthy.* They who will not accept the offer of salvation by Christ are said to be *unworthy* of it. God does not exclude any man because he is a sinner, but only as he *will* continue to be one, and refuses to be cleansed from his sins. See ch. x. 37, 38.

9. *The highways.* The public streets, or better, the squares where many streets meet, and where a crowd of people might be expected to be found. If we understand it as public roads in the country, it seems to be well adapted to represent the call of the Gentiles, that is, nations beyond the circuit of the Jewish city or covenant. The call was made in the free preaching of the Gospel, after the fall of Jerusalem.

10. *Bad and good.* Men of all characters. In God's all-perfect view, none are deserving to be called *good.* But the words are used according to the distinctions men make among themselves. The servants collect all into the Church, of rich and poor, moral and vicious, who repent and reform.

11. *When the King came in.* He Who comes in to judge in this way is the Son of God, and this coming is at the second Advent. And then many will be found not prepared to meet Him. Ch. xxv. 11, 12; 1 Peter iv. 17. They have not wrought out that "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." Heb. xii. 14. ¶ *The wedding garment.* It *may* have been the custom for kings, in such a case as this, to have given garments to all who had received their invitations to a wedding. And many interesting facts are cited by commentators and travellers. See Gen. xlv. 22; 2 Kings x. 22; Esth. vi. 8; viii. 15. Chardin relates the story of a vizier of the Persian Shah, who lost his life for not appearing, when sent for, in a certain robe given him by the monarch. If the robes had been furnished to all the guests, then this man was guilty of contempt. However this may be, the real meaning of the divine side of the parable is plain. There is a robe furnished us by Christ, even the cleansing from sin, and the sanctification of the soul by the gift of the Holy Ghost, which the Apostle terms "a putting on Christ." Col. ii. 9, 10, 12. As to the want of respect of the man in the feast, the Jews must have known wherein it lay. And as they did not object, it is by far too late for us to make any difficulty concerning it, from our *ignorance* of what may have been customary. In the Church, God the Son gives men time to meet Him in peace, and if they will not do it, they are to blame. The wedding garment is that preparation which will make us fit to see God, and which the Apostle has summed up in one word—*holiness.* It is the "white linen, which is the righteousness of the saints." Rev. xix. 8. It is faith, hope, charity, good works, purity, and sanc-

Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding-garment? And he was speechless.

13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness:[a] there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

14 For many are called, but few *are* chosen.[b]

15 ¶ Then[c] went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in *his* talk.

16 And they sent out unto him their disciples, with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know

a Ch. 8. 12. *b* Ch. 20. 16. *c* Mark 12. 13, &c.; Lu. 20. 20, &c.

tity, all interweaved and combined, as the "curious adorning" of the soul; the robe "washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb." Rev. vii. 14. In the exhortation to the Holy Supper, a type of that last Feast, the minister exhorts all to a due preparation for the worthy receiving, and states the way and means thereto, *in the diligent examination of the conscience;* "that all may come *holy* and *clean* to such a heavenly feast, in the marriage garment required by God in holy Scripture: and be received as worthy partakers of that holy table." See Job xxix. 14; Is. lxi. 10.

12. *Friend.* See note ch. xx. 13. ¶ *Speechless.* He had no excuse, which shows that his want of a proper garment was purely his own fault.

13. *Outer darkness.* See notes, ch. viii. 12; xiii. 42. He is cast out from the full blaze and splendor of the feast into the darkness of the street. "Considered in a moral and practical light, this parable should teach us the necessity of adorning the soul with all Christian graces and virtues, that we may always be in a due state of preparation to approach God in any act of religion, and also to stand before Him with humble confidence in the day of judgment."—*Bp. Mann.*

14. *For many are called, &c.* See note ch. xx. 16. Many of the Jews are called, but few have so obeyed the call as to be worthy of being chosen at last. The election spoken of in the Bible is simply the inestimable privilege of being invited to obey Christ. The elect and the called are properly all those who are received into the Church on earth. That there are bad and good among the elect is shown in verse 10, and by this man, who was called, but not chosen; as also by the fact that the Apostles apply the term *elect* to whole Churches, in which we know that there were sinful and careless individuals. All then who are received into a "state of salvation," i. e. in which salvation is offered them if they will fulfil the conditions of it, are *elected.* And whether they will be the finally *chosen*, depends not on any secret decree, but on themselves and "the promises of God as they be generally set forth in Scripture." If they put on the wedding garment, they will be chosen. "This parable," saith Theophylact, "respects the Jews, who were called but not chosen, as not hearkening to God's call;" whence he infers that "our calling is of God, but *that we are elect or not is of ourselves.*"—*Dr. Whitby.*

15—22. *The first plot of the rulers defeated.* See Mark xii. 12–17; Luke xx. 20–26. *Then went the Pharisees.* They began that series of councils of the Sanhedrim which resulted in the violent scenes which follow. They were frightened by the miracle of the raising of Lazarus (John xi. 48–53), and enraged by the parables which Jesus had delivered against them. ¶ *Entangle Him in His talk.* Get Him to say something which they could turn against Him, either with the people, by inflaming their passions, or with the Roman governor, by raising the charge of treason.

16. *The Herodians.* Who these men were, or exactly what opinions they held on religious subjects, is not known. It is plain, from their name, that they were attached to Herod, or rather to his political maxims. They took their

that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any *man*: for thou regardest not the person of men.

17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cesar, or not?

18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, *ye* hypocrites?

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title from Herod the Great. They probably taught that it was the safest, most politic wisdom to follow the customs of the *state*, rather than seek to insist upon the precepts of the law of God, when those precepts caused any difficulty or danger. They would be called, in this day, Erastians or temporizers. St. Jerome calls them "Herod's soldiers, or those whom the Pharisees in mockery called Herodians, because they paid tribute to the Romans." From the words "the *leaven* of Herod" (compare Matt. xvi. 12 with Mark viii. 15), some suppose them to have agreed in their doctrines with the Sadducees. They certainly maintained the propriety of paying tribute to the Romans. They were sent with the Pharisees because of this opinion. The Pharisees and most of the Jews were opposed to paying such tribute. The Herodians were in favor of it. The snare which was now laid before Jesus was put with consummate skill. If He expressed an opinion on either side, He would make enemies. If He had said it *was right* to pay tribute to the Romans, He would have enraged the common people. If He had said it *was not right*, the Herodians would have accused Him to the Roman governor. Never was a question more cunningly put; never was a snare more completely eluded. St. Luke adds, that these emissaries of the Sanhedrim were "to feign themselves just men" (xx. 20), i. e. men who loved truth only, and sought the solution of a case of conscience. ¶ *We know, &c.* They sought to throw Him off His guard, and "to spirit Him up to some bold and offensive declaration of His opinion." Jesus was true, and "taught the way of God," or pure religion, in truth. He was *independent*, fearless of the evil arts and passions of men. He was *impartial* in meting out truth to all who sought for it at His lips. That He was all this, these wicked men found to their shame. ¶ *Thou regardest not, &c.* Art not afraid of Herod or Cæsar. As if they had said, "We have been debating a certain question, and cannot agree. Our high esteem for your character as an impartial teacher, has brought us to you to ask your opinion. Will you settle our *private* doubts, that we may know how a pious Jew ought to act in so nice a matter, when he has the precept of Deuteronomy (xvii. 15) on the one side, and political considerations on the other?" The strength of the plot lay in their pretence of being *private* and *just* men.

17. *Is it lawful?* Is it permitted by the law of Moses? Can we do it as just men? That the Pharisees were wrong in their interpretation of Deut. xvii. 15, is plain. For though they ought not to consent to the putting a strange king over the nation, they were bound to obey that king, when God had suffered them to be subjected to him. ¶ *To give tribute to Cæsar, or not? Tribute* was the tax paid to the Roman government. Good men should have paid it without murmuring. 1 Pet. ii. 13, 14. ¶ *To Cæsar.* This name was common to all the Roman Emperors, as Pharaoh was, in the times of Moses, common to all the Egyptian kings. Tiberius was then ruling.

18. *He perceived their wickedness.* He was a "discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart," and knew all that was in man. John ii. 24, 25. ¶ *Why tempt ye Me?* Try Me, to seek My destruction by the words of My own mouth. He showed them that He saw through their plot, and would not be entangled by them. ¶ *Hypocrites.* See note ch. vi. 2.

19. *The tribute-money.* The coin used in tribute to the Romans was the silver denarius or penny. That paid into the Temple was the shekel.

20. *Whose is this image?* The denarius

19 Shew me the tribute-money. And they brought unto him a penny.‖

20 And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and ‖superscription?

21 They say unto him, Cesar's. Then saith he unto them,[a] Render therefore unto Cesar, the things which are Cesar's; and unto God, the things that are God's.

22 When they had heard *these words*, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

23 ¶ The same day came to him[b] the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,

‖ *For value 7d. half penny.* Ch. 20. 2. ‖ Or, *inscription.* *a* Ch. 17. 25; Rom. 13. 7. *b* Mark 12. 18, &c.; Lu. 20. 27, &c. *c* Acts 23. 8.

had on it the image of the Roman Emperor, and, as Dr. Hammond informs us, also a *superscription*, or motto engraved around it to this effect: *Cæsar Augustus, Judea being subdued.*

21. *Render therefore unto Cæsar.* "Pay him back his own. You asked if you should *give* any thing, but you may learn to pay to Cæsar that which is his own, and which being in your possession shows that you have received some advantage from him." Very few disturbers of public peace ever bear in mind the principle, that government confers on them certain benefits, for which it has a divine right to demand what is requisite for its support and dignity. Scripture commands obedience to lawful authority. See Rom. xiii. 5, 7; Tit. iii. 1. ¶ *And unto God the things that are God's.* The tithes, first-fruits, oblations, and sacrifices, with all the obedience of the truly pious Jew. "It behooves us also to render to God the things that are His, namely, body, soul and will. For Cæsar's coin is in the gold in which his image was portrayed. That is God's coin on which the Divine image is stamped; give therefore your money to Cæsar, but preserve a conscience void of offence for God."—*St. Hillary.*

22. *They marvelled, &c.* At the simple means which He used to refute the wisdom of the wicked. They had held a council, and had set their snare; and a poor penny has sprung it on themselves. They marvel at it, and went away, wondering, but alas, not believing. They departed to plot other wickedness, and to accomplish by violence, what they could not effect by skill.

23–33. *The Sadducees are answered concerning the existence of spirits and a future state.* See Mark xii. 18–27; Luke xx. 27–38.

23. *The Sadducees.* For an account of them see note ch. iii. 7. They were hostile to the Pharisees, and came to Jesus, supposing that He would side with them, as He had just poured contempt on their adversaries. They could not suppose that He was able to stand alone, without seeking favor of any party. Their opinion is stated (Acts xxiii. 8), as opposed to the belief of the separate existence of spirits, and by inference, the resurrection of the body. They imagine that they are proposing an insuperable objection. ¶ *Resurrection.* The rising again of the body. The soul rests in peace waiting for the resurrection of its partner. Heb. xi. 39, 40; John v. 29. Jesus does not reveal the doctrine of the resurrection *clearly*, for it was a result of His own resurrection, for which men were not then prepared. He *fully* answers the question of the Sadducees, "Whose wife shall she be?" Reflection will show any one, that on that answer depends the true inference, of the *separate* existence of spirits, of angels, and the renewed life of the body. It is not strange that Jesus should say so little, for these Sadducees knew that within the year He had actually recalled Lazarus from the dead.

24. *Master, Moses, &c.* Deut. xxv. 5, 6. This was a law which ceased with the Jewish polity. It was meant in compassion for their ignorance, who saw only by shadows the life beyond the grave, and who regarded death as a

24 Saying, Master, [a]Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

25 Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased; and having no issue, left his wife unto his brother.

26 Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh.

27 And last of all the woman died also.

28 Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing[b] the scriptures, nor the power of God.

30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the [c]angels of God in heaven.

31 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,

32 [d]I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac, and the

a Deut. 25. 5. *b* John 20. 9.

c Ch. 18. 10; 1 John 3. 2. *d* Ex. 3. 6; Acts 7. 32; Heb. 11. 16.

greater evil, if it should cause their names to cease. ¶ *Raise up seed unto his brother.* They were legally the children of the deceased. This custom is referred to by many divines, in order to explain the genealogy of our Saviour given by St. Luke.

25–28. *There were with us seven, &c.* The ground-work of this fable is found in the Apocryphal book of Tobit iii. 8. They alter it a little to suit their purpose. They wished to show, that the future state was impossible. But they argued on the false premise, that men would rise again, with all the passions and relations of this life. Our Lord answers their question, in the first place, and then shows them that their favorite book, the Pentateuch, evidently *implied* a separate life of the soul.

29. *Ye do err, &c.* Three things united in their error, as the same three things still cause men to err in matters of faith. 1. They did not understand the Scriptures (see Dan. xii. 2; Is. xxvi. 19, &c.), for they denied them and lost all the lessons which a careful study of them would have taught: which was a want of modesty. 2. They did not understand that the power of God can do all things—which was a want of faith. The same objection is made now from chemistry and the changes of matter. It goes upon the same want of knowledge of the Almighty power of the Creator. 3. They erred in supposing that the future world would be in all things like this—which was a want of right reason. The future body of the resurrection springs out of this as a plant from a germ. It follows its own laws, being a *spiritual body.* 1 Cor. xv. 44.

30. *Neither marry, &c.* Therefore the objection of the Sadducees is altogether without force. Marriage bears a necessary relation to *death*, being a gracious design of the Creator to perpetuate the species. When death ceases in that future life, marriage is at an end. Therefore St. Luke adds that Jesus said; "neither do they *die any more*, being the children of the resurrection." ¶ *Are as the angels.* They are without the passions, are pure, celestial and immortal. They are filled with chaste contemplations, and receive all the impressions of divine purity, without the intervention of gross earthly bodies as in this life.

31, 32. *As touching the resurrection.* Two things deserve notice. 1. That our Lord answers the Sadducees according to their peculiar notions. They held only to the books of Moses. They had cited from Moses the law of marriage, on which they had founded their objection. Now, said our Saviour, from

God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

33 And when the multitude heard *this*, they [a]were astonished at his doctrine.

34 ¶ But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.

35 [b]Then one of them *which was* a lawyer, asked *him a question*, tempting him, and saying,

36 Master, which *is* the great commandment in the law?

a Ch. 7. 28.

b Lu. 10. 25, &c.

the evident meaning of these very books, you may learn the doctrine of the resurrection as taught by Moses. 2. Our Lord did not undertake to explain the doctrine, as it was revealed to the Christian Church, after His return from the grave. It was not in His divine purpose to anticipate it. The Scripture which He cites is found Exod. iii. 6. If when a man died, he ceased entirely from all existence both in body and soul, then, by all the laws of their language, he must be spoken of as past and as *nothing*. Moses would then have heard Jehovah saying to him, "I was the God of Abraham, &c." But when he records the saying of the Almighty to him, made long after the deaths of the patriarchs, as in the present tense, he implied (so at least that no one could *deny*, however they failed to believe) that God declared the souls of these men to be still existing in a separate state. St. Luke says, that Jesus added, for *all live to Him*. Their cavil is therefore answered. It is plain that the raising of the body in a spiritual, incorruptible state is not directly taught in this passage. That doctrine belongs properly to the Christian Church.

34, 40. *A single Pharisee questions Him.* See Mark xii. 28–34; Luke xx. 39, 40.

34. *The Pharisees gathered together.* In the temple where these conversations occurred. The Pharisees were standing near by. After they heard Jesus silence, or as the Greek word strictly means *muzzle*, as one would a brute beast, their enemies, the Sadducees, they take council to try Him still farther. They select one of their number to question Him.

35. *A lawyer.* A teacher or doctor of the law. St. Matthew says that the question was put to *tempt* Jesus, to try Him. This may have been with or without an evil design. St. Mark says, that this man "was not far from the kingdom of God." For either the man was of a candid and honest turn of mind, and was desirous of learning the truth in order to practise it, or he may have been convinced by the perfect clearness of the reply of our Lord, and instantly acknowledged in his mind its truth, and so "answered discreetly." Mark xii. 34. At the same time the other Pharisees had put him forward, as one of the best of their number, with a malicious design, and he, perhaps, may have been conscious that he was used as an instrument for this purpose. ¶ *Tempting Him.* Testing Him in a difficult case, with or without the desire to see Him fail.

36. *Which is the great commandment?* Which one law must we keep above all others? The Jewish rabbis had decided that no man could observe perfectly all the commands of the law delivered by Moses, without infringing some of them in the letter or spirit, by ignorance, accident, force or self-will. Acts xv. 10. They inferred, therefore, that God would be satisfied if a man selected one of the precepts, and observed it carefully. It would serve for all. This had raised the question among them, which was the chief of the commands? Some said it was to observe the sacrifices, in which they discovered the element of forgiveness and perfection before God; others placed it in wearing the phylactery, by which they were separated from the Gentiles, and reminded of their election as the people of the Lord: and others

37 Jesus said unto him, [a]Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

38 This is the first and great commandment.

a Deut. 6. 5; 10. 12.

39 And the second[b] *is* like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

40 On[c] these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

b Lev. 19. 18; Rom. 13. 9; Jas. 2. 8. *c* Ch. 7. 12; 1 Tim. 1. 5.

exalted as paramount the law of circumcision; others, again, the precept of the Sabbath. This lawyer was skilled in these niceties, and doubtless ready to argue on them till sunset. ¶ *The law.* The law contained in the five books of Moses.

37. *Jesus said unto him.* See St. Mark xii. 29. Jesus gives His decision in the words of Moses (Deut. vi. 4), showing that the law had itself determined the question. He makes no innovation, and offers no new theory for mystical disputings, but answers fully, by the very language of the lawgiver. ¶ *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God.* A man must love God with his best, highest faculties, with the *heart*, i. e. with all his affections and desires fixed on Him, as his chief good: with soul; his spiritual nature must be fixed in the enjoyment of His presence: with mind; all his intellectual acts, opinions, conclusions, must be brought into entire subjection to the pure truth, as God has revealed it. Lusts take the heart off from God; a rebellious will, the soul; a false doctrine, the mind. He only keeps the whole law who avoids all. St. Mark adds, "*with all thy strength*," which means that we must love the Lord with the greatest diligence and degree of affection.

38. *This is the first and great commandment.* Deut. v. 5. It is the source of piety, that one thing which every man must have to be saved. This is the spirit of the first table of the law, on which were engraven the first four commands. A man must have this inward principle of love to God, and he will then have no other gods; will bow down to no created object, nor take God's name in vain, nor fail in reverence to His holy day and worship.

39. *The second is like unto it.* As much like it as one table of stone was to the other, or as the stream is to the fountain. James iii. 11. The same principle of love to God lies at the foundation of both tables. James ii. 10, 11. A man cannot reconcile the disobedience of any one command with a profession of the other. St. John declares love of the brethren to be the *evidence* of our love of God, while the love of God is the true source of a love of the brethren. 1 John iv. 20. The lawyer has his question answered, and in a manner so satisfactory, that he can make no objection. Our Lord thus avoids the sophistries of men by the simple words of Scripture.

40. *On these two commandments hang, &c.* All things in the Old Testament dispensation proceed from these two laws; all that Moses and the prophets wrote are intended to bring men to this principle of love. And if this was evident in the Mosaic system, how much more so is it in the Gospel. The Church has placed this passage in the ante-communion service, just after the Decalogue, in order, as Bishop White says, "to give to the weight of Moses the greater authority of Christ." It then reminds the communicant that he must have the spirit of love for God and man, in attempting to keep the Commandments. In Baptism a solemn promise was made, that we should keep the commandments, both in their letter and spirit. They are, therefore, read to us when we approach the other sacrament, that we may examine whether we have kept that promise. Again, we are exhorted by the priest to kneel down devoutly, and make an humble confession to Almighty God of all sins committed against Him, in order that we may re-

41 ¶ While[a] the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,

42 Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, *The son* of David.

43 He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord,[b] saying,

44 The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?

45 If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?

a Mark 12. 35, &c.; Lu. 20. 41, &c.

b Ps. 110. 1; Acts 2. 34; Heb. 1. 13; 10. 12, 13.

ceive the sacrament to our comfort. This use of the above passage, in our service, shows us how seriously we should regard it, as bearing to us the same relation which the Decalogue did to the Jews, sealed, as it were, by the solemn condition which was made concerning the former: "Which, if a man do, *he shall live in them: I am the Lord.*" Lev. xviii. 5; Ex. xx. 11, 13. The lawyer was convinced, and answered from an honest heart, that Jesus had "said the truth;" that, indeed, this principle of love contained in it all true obedience, and was better than "whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices." Whereupon our Lord declared that He was almost prepared for the faith in Him, for he was honest and open to conviction. The enemies of Jesus were silenced from that time.

41–46. *Jesus now propounds a question.* See Mark xii. 35–37; Luke xx. 41–44.

41. *While, &c.* Before they had separated. Perhaps some little time had passed, in order that they might ask Him any farther questions. But as it appears that they are afraid to do so, Jesus in turn becomes the questioner, and by silencing them prepares the way for the tremendous doctrines of the following chapter. It is His last discourse to the people. It is His parting from them, and He is moved even to tears that their house after this parting is henceforth left unto them desolate.

42. *What think ye of Christ?* Or, of *the* Christ, the Messiah. He does not ask them, *if they think Him* to be the Messiah, but what their opinion is concerning the Messiah, who is foretold in the Scriptures. It was a question which they ought to have answered in simplicity, but could not do so without allowing that they had seen the signs of divine power in Jesus, and refused to obey Him. Our Lord does not solve the difficulty, for He was unwilling to declare openly every thing concerning Himself until after the resurrection. He makes it evident that the Messiah was to be of a nature infinitely superior to David. ¶ *The son of David.* See note ch. i. 1. He was, as they knew, to be a descendant of David.

43. *How then, &c.* See Ps. cx. 1. How is it possible that David should address Him by a title, which could not in any case be given to a natural descendant? The Pharisees could not answer. The true answer is, that David called Him Lord, because He was so. He was the Lord Jehovah, and in His divine nature David saw Him in heaven. And yet He was to be his son—in His human nature: and after the union of both natures to hear the Father exalting Him to His right hand for ever. ¶ *In Spirit.* "By the Holy Ghost." Mark xii. 36. The Old Testament was inspired for this very purpose, that it should be the vehicle and preparation for Christ the Lord. Therefore, under the mere letter of it, there runs the sublimer meaning of the Gospel covenant. For when two persons combine to utter truth, as did the Holy Spirit and the spirit of David, the voices of both will be heard. The Psalter is used in the Church of Christ, because of this inspiration. The Christian is tutored by its constant repetition to see under the letter, that seems to be temporal and suited sometimes to David, sometimes to his son Solomon, the presence of David's greater Son, the Prince of Peace. Ps. lxxviii. 2; 1 Pet. i. 21; Acts ii. 30–34; i. 16; 2 Sam. xxiii. 2.

46 And no man was able to answer[a] him a word, neither durst any *man*, from that day forth, ask him any more *questions*.

a Lu. 14. 6.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Passion Week—Tuesday.

THEN spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,

44. *The Lord said, &c.* Ps. cx. 1. St. Jerome, who was a critical Hebrew scholar and godly father has said, "Christ is therefore called David's Lord, not in respect of His descent from Him, but in respect of His eternal generation from the Father, wherein He was before His father according to the flesh. And he calls Him Lord, not *by a mere chance*, nor of *His own thought*, but by the Holy Spirit." The whole Psalm refers directly to Christ, and cannot be explained except of Him; nor of Him, except in His incarnate nature. ¶ *Thy footstool.* Shall be entirely subdued to Thee; which will happen in its fulness at the day of judgment. Ps. li. 9–12; Heb. x. 13; 1 Cor. xv. 25.

46. *Neither, &c.* Jesus had confounded the various sects of the Jews, asking and answering questions. The first plots of His foes had failed. They cannot catch Him in His words. They now resort to violence.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1. *Then spake Jesus, &c.* It was His last address to that multitude. The Pharisees and rulers were hardened. He speaks to the multitude in the temple, in a sad, stern voice, seeking to rouse them to repentance before it is too late. His words fall in vain. They refuse Him, and rush on to destruction.

2. *Scribes and Pharisees.* Your rulers and guides. See note ch. iii. 7. ¶ *They sit in Moses' seat.* They are your lawful rulers, and have a commission from God to command your obedience, having succeeded Moses and the seventy elders. Numb. xi. 16. To sit in his seat means to hold his authority; as one takes a vacant seat of another while he is absent. The Scribes and Pharisees were the regular authorized successors of Moses, and taught the interpretations of the law given by him.

3. *All therefore, &c.* All things which they teach you out of, or according to the law of Moses. They were to obey all that was read to them out of the law and prophets, or evidently deduced from it by plain inference. Secondly, to obey all that was consistent with the law. For in all ages there will be somewhat left to be decided, by the living rulers of the Church, since the law does not decide all particulars, but only generals. An instance in point was the tithing of mint, &c., verse 23. It was not in the law, but was properly inferred from its general principles, and as it was commanded by lawful authority, was not discouraged by Christ. Jesus cautioned the disciples against the *leaven* of the Pharisees (ch. xvi. 6, 12), and their dangerous conceits. Ch. xv. 1–9. ¶ *But do not after their works.* "Christians are bound to observe whatever their authorized ministers and pastors shall deliver out of the Word of God, and to consider every holy ordinance as valid, which they shall perform according to the holy institution of Christ, even although their character and conduct should not be wholly conformable to the duties which they teach." —*Bp. Tomline.* See *Art. XXVI.*

4. *For they bind heavy burdens.* They prepare them for others. The phrase is taken from the Eastern manner of loading the camel. Their burdens are packed in bundles and put upon their backs. The Pharisees imposed the severest ordinances on the people, and made religion more weighty and laborious by numberless traditions. St Peter called the system a burden which none could bear with a quiet conscience. Acts xv. 10. ¶ *With one of their fingers.* This means, not that the Pharisees refused to observe these traditions themselves, for they were both zealous and scrupulous; but that they would not lighten the burden of these useless observances, when they saw others fainting under it. They, unlike the Lord of

2 Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit[a] in Moses' seat:

3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do: but do not [b]ye after their works: for they say, and do not.

4 For they bind heavy burdens,[c] and grievous to be borne, and lay *them* on men's shoulders;

a Mal. 2. 7. *b* Rom. 2. 19. *c* Acts 15. 10.

but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers.

5 But all their works they do for to be [d]seen of men: they make broad their [e]phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,

6 And love[f] the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,

d Ch. 6. 2, 5. *e* Num. 15. 38; Deut. 6. 8. *f* Mark 12. 38, &c.; Lu. 11. 43, &c.

all men, reverse His benovelent design, and will have judgment before mercy. Every imitation of true religion is harsh and burdensome. The liberty of Christ alone can make us indeed free.

5. *Phylacteries.* The word means guards or preservatives. The corresponding word in Hebrew meant *prayers.* They either imagined them *amulets* to keep them from evil, especially evil spirits, or as a means of bringing to mind the words of the law. Of the phylactery St. Jerome says: "The Lord when He had given the commandments of the law through Moses, added at the end, "*and thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be ever before thine eyes.*" Deut. vi. 8. The meaning of which is, Let My precepts be in thine hand so as to be fulfilled in thy works; let them be before thine eyes, so as that thou shalt meditate upon them day and night. This the Pharisees misinterpreting, wrote on parchments the Ten Commandments, and folding them up, tied them on their forehead, so making them a crown for their head, that they should always be before their eyes. Moses had in another place given command that they should make fringes of blue in the borders of their garments, to distinguish the people of Israel (Numb. xv. 39): that as in their bodies circumcision, so in their garments, the fringe might discriminate the Jewish nation. But these superstitious teachers, catching at popular favor, and making gain of silly women, made broad hems, and fastened them with sharp pins, that as they walked or sat they might be pricked, and by such monitors be recalled to the duties of God's service. This embroidery then, of the Decalogue, they called phylacteries, that is conservatories, because those who wore them, wore them for their own protection and security. So little did the Pharisees understand that they were to be worn on the heart and not on the body." See Ex. xiii. 9; Deut. xxii. 12.

6. *The uppermost rooms at feasts.* The word room here, means only *place*, and not a separate chamber, as it generally signifies. It seems that the translators used the word in the force which it retains, when we say, one has come into the room of such a person; *i. e.* into his seat or place. The uppermost seat was that nearest the master of the feast. In their feasts the oriental nations anciently reclined on couches, arranged on the outsides of three tables placed on three sides of a square, and called a *triclinium.* They lay extended, three on each couch, supporting the head with the left arm and hand, and eating with the right. This custom explains many phrases in the four Gospels. *To lay in one's bosom* at meals, as is said of St. John (Lu. xvi. 22; John xiii. 23), is to be the one reclining just before another. And the anointing of the Saviour's feet (Lu. vii. 37, 38), was easily done by a person passing behind the couch on which He lay. ¶ *Chief seats in the synagogue.* At first those Jews who had no office in the synagogue, sat according to age, but afterwards it became customary for the more learned to occupy the higher seats. This custom had en-

7 And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

8 But be not ye called [a]Rabbi: for one is your Master, [b]*even* Christ; and all ye are brethren.

9 And call no *man* your father upon the earth: for one is your Father which is in Heaven.

10 Neither be ye called mas-

[a] Jas. 3. 1.

[b] Mark 1. 6.

gendered an inordinate desire for such a useless distinction. It is the spirit of *ostentation* and love of applause, which is condemned. It may be shown now by one who affectedly seeks for the lowest seat, as if to show how humble he is, and how good a Christian. The only way to avoid the thing condemned by our Lord, is to seek to be truly humble.

7. *Greetings in the market-places.* Salutations at the street-corners and in the assemblies of men. They loved to hear their disciples hail them in a crowd, as Rabbi, great teacher, &c. The same inordinate love of human applause is condemned in these three verses. It is inconsistent with the proper character of a religious teacher. Ministers should fear God entirely, and value beyond all things the approval of a conscience void of offence. ¶ *Rabbi.* My great one; my teacher or master. See John i. 38; xx. 16. It was a Hebrew title given to those who were learned in the laws of Moses.

8. *Be not ye, &c.* Certain men have understood these words literally, and while seeking to avoid one error of the Pharisees, have fallen into their worst, that of interpreting the letter without the spirit. To call one Rabbi, implied a degree of subservience to him at that time, which was inconsistent with a right judgment. The Jews were content with what the Rabbi said, and looked no farther. They received his sayings as infallible. What is here commanded is this: not to use such titles nor receive them, which would lead any to yield undue submission to any man's will and judgment. St. Paul called Timothy his own "son in the Gospel." Timothy could surely without sin have called him *his father* in the same sense. It is not lawful to receive teachers and fathers among men, so as to forget that all are alike subject to Christ. Titles of distinction are inevitable. What more honorable than the name Apostle? If the best men should, by common consent, take the humblest title, say of *servants*, it would at once become a word of honor. When such words detract from the honor of God, or incline us to lean on human authority, or to forget that we are brethren, they are wrong. Our Lord can hardly be imagined to have been thinking, at so solemn a time as this, of the innocent customs of literary degrees, as has been somewhat strangely fancied by some men.

9. *And call no man your father upon earth.* A precept of the same signification as the last, and to be limited like it, by the laws of good judgment. Children must call their parents by a name, and must do it with reverence suited to their superiority. Eph. vi. 1; Col. iii. 20. The Jews called the Rabbis *Abba*, father, and puffed them with foolish conceits. The Christians are to call no man father on earth, in the sense that they are to be named by no name of religious teachers as depending upon them, without studying the Scriptures for themselves: not to reverence any man however learned or pious, whether Calvin or Wesley or any one, so as to follow his commands, without inquiring whether he has followed Christ. But aside from this error Christians may safely follow their religious guides in the paths of Scriptural practices and teachings. See Heb. xiii. 17.

10. *Masters.* Not masters of families, but *leaders* or *guides* of men. The Christian teacher is to subject all his teachings to the revealed Word of God, and seek to teach the truth in its purity and simplicity, not mingling it with his own individual notions and additions, in order to make himself the leader of

ters: for one is your Master, *even* Christ.

11 But he that is [a]greatest among you, shall be your servant.

12 And [b]whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted.

13 But wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in *yourselves*, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

14 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [c]for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer:

[a] Ch. 20. 26, 27. [b] Prov. 29. 23; 1 Pet. 5. 5.

[c] 2 Tim. 3. 6; Tit. 1, 11.

those who hear him, to have them depend on him, and require his help to walk in novel paths, whither he has led them. A Christian should study Scripture, and obey it first of all. If in doubt, he should consent to the opinion of the Church, as far as possible, knowing that Christ has promised to lead her into truth. If still undecided, he may study the writings of holy and learned men in order to form a sound and prudent opinion. Else, while he wishes first of all to find out what his favorite leader has said, and flatters himself that he is a *liberal* man, he is forgetting the spirit of the Lord Jesus, and is making himself liable to be blown about by every wind of doctrine.

11, 12. *Greatest.* In allusion to the word Rabbi, which means, my great one. This sentiment occurs ten times in the Gospels. See note, ch. xx. 26. Jesus honors and blesses true humility, but not affected, not the pride which apes it.

13. *Wo unto you, &c.* Wo, i. e. sorrow and punishment shall come upon you. Rev. viii. 13. ¶ *Ye hypocrites.* See note ch. vi 2. Jesus denounces woes against these wicked and impious men which were soon to be terribly fulfilled. He concludes with the sublime wail over their city. The dark clouds begin to gather around the great central truth of Christianity—*the Crucifixion:* when even the laws of inanimate nature were shocked for awhile out of their course. All the remainder of this Gospel glooms with the coming eclipse of the Sun of Righteousness. It contains the prophecy of the Destruction of the Holy City, the end of all things, the Judgment, betrayal, death, and burial, with a few verses at the close telling of the resurrection. ¶ *For ye shut up the kingdom of heaven.* See note ch. iii. 2. They prevented men from believing in Jesus, and entering into His covenant. They would not believe in Him themselves, nor suffer others whom they could influence to do so. They not only opposed Him with their political power and violence, but they had corrupted the interpretation of prophecy, and obscured it by their traditions, so that the common people could not appreciate the claims of the Messiah, when they were presented to them. Lu. xi. 52.

14. See Mark xii. 40; Luke xx. 47. *Devour widows' houses.* Houses signifies the property or means of support of unprotected widows. This sin is mentioned in close connection with "for a pretence make long prayer." The one is cause, the other effect. They put on an appearance of great sanctity, and made long prayers and observed strictly the forms of religion, and persuaded by such means weak and piously disposed women to put confidence in them. Devotion was a mask to avarice. When once they had obtained possession, they robbed their victims of every thing. Widows are unprotected, and unable in most countries to act for themselves in matters of property. They are spoken of, therefore, in Scripture, as under the special charge of the Almighty. Ex. xxii. 22; Deut. x. 18; James i. 27. Nothing is more corrupting to religion than such hypocrisy. ¶ *Long prayer.* They used long prayers to gain the ends

therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

15 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of ‖hell than yourselves.

16 Wo unto you, *ye* [b]blind guides! which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor.

‖ Or, *Gehenna.* *a* Ch. 15. 14.

of avarice. They are said to have remained three hours in prayer, and pretended that their lengthened devotions availed for others who gave them money, as well as for themselves. The dervishes of Persia at present perform wonderful feats in their long continued prayers; but seem not to have reached the educated skill of the Romanist priests in exacting money, by their devotions, from the simple and pious. ¶ *Damnation.* As their long prayers testified their deliberate malice, and were a continued insult to the Almighty, to whom they pretended to do honor, while they sought only to make Him a party to their designs, and broke the spirit of all His laws; therefore these prayers would only work out for them a more severe condemnation. It would be greater than it would have been if they had been less bold and artful in their sin. They were not condemned for long prayers, for we have the example of such in Daniel (ch. ix. 3), of Anna (Luke ii. 37), and of our Lord himself, Who often continued all night in prayer. See vi. 12. Their making prayer a pretence and hypocritical show for wicked purposes was an impiety.

15. *Ye compass sea and land.* They spared no pains to make one a convert to their opinions: which zeal was commendable, only that the end was bad. ¶ *Proselyte.* A Gentile converted to the Jewish religion. There were great distinctions allowed among these. There were some who embraced the whole Jewish system and sought earnestly for its rewards. And among the best of these was the centurion (ch. viii. 5) and Cornelius mentioned Acts x. These were called *proselytes of righteousness.* Others received only certain parts of the system, but not circumcision, and others were only circumcised as a means of safety. The Pharisees spared no labor to make men their followers, and that to increase the power of the nation. But they confused those whom they converted, by their notions, and corrupted them by their vanities and false doctrines. Often converts from one religion to another simply reject their old superstitions and seize eagerly all the worse parts of their new faith, and end in becoming infidels. Such were these proselytes. The Jewish writers as well as the Christian inform us that these converts were notorious for their impiety. ¶ *Child of hell.* Worthy of eternal punishment. In the Hebrew phraseology, they were children of any thing, who did the works which merited or belonged to it. We learn that there are degrees of punishment in hell, since these converts were twice as wicked as the heathen. A sinner's punishment is increased by reason of his greater sins.

16. *Which say, &c.* See note ch. v. 33, 37. If a man swear at all that he will do a certain thing, it is supposed that he has uttered in this manner the whole truth of his soul, that he has called upon God who seeth the secrets of his heart to witness that he is solemnly bent on being faithful to his word, and to punish him if he should by fear or treachery prove false. Therefore oaths were made only in the name of some intelligent being, who could know the secrets of the inner mind. But the Pharisees invented a most detestable and dangerous distinction in their solemn oaths. If this horrible doctrine is once believed and practised, it ruins society, destroys faith among men, and makes way for every crime. Therefore

17 *Ye* fools, and blind! for whether is greater, the gold, or the [c]temple that sanctifieth the gold?

18 And whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is [‖]guilty.

19 *Ye* fools, and blind! for whether[b] *is* greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?

20 Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.

21 And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by [c]him that dwelleth therein.

22 And he that shall swear by

a Ex. 30. 29. ‖ Or, *a debtor*, or, *bound*.

b Ex. 29. 37. *c* 1 Kings 8. 13; Ps. 26. 8, & 132. 13.

oaths are forbidden. Therefore let Christians be *true* in all their communications, and not deceiving themselves with vain and deceitful distinctions in their promises. To swear by the gold of the temple was nothing indeed, unless it meant to call on God to punish treachery in the one who broke the oath. ¶ *Gold of the temple.* Any of the gold with which the temple was ornamented. It shows a trifling spirit of oath-making. A man in a vain conversation would take an oath thoughtlessly by some golden article of the temple. He must keep the oath, because of some ignorant superstition of the Pharisees. To be a *debtor*, was to be bound in debt to that gold, not as belonging to God, but as a precious metal: bound to keep the vow made, or commute for it by money.

17. *That sanctifieth the gold.* Any thing is sanctified which is set apart for sacred uses. It is no more to be used for common purposes. For a man to be holy he must give his will to the influences of God's Holy Spirit, which dwells in him if he is in covenant with God. But for any inanimate object to be sanctified, it needs only that the will of God be known, that he accepts it for His own uses. The temple was sacred, even that of Herod. The Saviour here calls it sanctified. Churches are holy places, and should be entered with that awe which befits the presence of Him who inhabits them. It was a foolish notion of the Pharisees, that one article of the temple could be sacred, because a precious metal, and not another. Jesus teaches us to put reverence on the right ground, and reverence all the temples of His worship, because they are His.

18. *The altar.* The great altar of burnt-offerings, which stood before the porch of the temple. See 2 Chron. v. 1. See note ch. v. 23. It was a place of great veneration, since it was the instrument by which the great idea of sacrifice was preserved; where men met God to seek for pardon of sin. ¶ *The gift that is upon it.* The sacrifices of animals. These were gifts made unto God by the people. They were commanded for purposes of religion. The Pharisees seem to have rated the holiness of an oath by the market value of the object sworn by, so that they might be the gainers by this price-current of piety. No Christian should permit the first advances of what is called the *doctrine of reserve.* His word should be true, and kept by him from love of truth for its own sake. They should avoid all light and vain invocations of sacred things, for God may, ere they are aware, call them into judgment for idle words, of which it will be a poor excuse to claim a want of meaning in saying them.

21. *Him that dwelleth therein.* Jehovah, the Second Person of the Divine Trinity, dwelt in the temple of Solomon, in the symbol of the Glory or Shechinah. 1 Kings viii. 10–13. But in the second temple, repaired by Herod, He dwelt not, except to the eye of faith, as He now dwells in the sacred courts of churches. Our Lord shows us how we ought to reverence all those houses which, like that second temple, are consecrated by a faith of His Presence.

heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.

23 Wo unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have [a]omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

24 *Ye* blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

25 Wo unto you, scribes and

a 1 Sam. 15. 32; Hos. 6. 6; Mic. 6. 8.

22. *The throne of God.* In heaven, the place of the most glorious manifestation of the Deity, where Christ sitteth at God's right hand. It is represented in Scripture as above us, in order to impress on our minds that it is infinitely glorious and above our comprehension. "Set your affections on things above," said the Apostle (Col. iii. 2), which words are intended to lead us to form a noble idea of the greatness and glory of the enjoyments of heaven.

23. *Ye pay tithe, &c.* Another abuse of God's law of which they were guilty, was the exalting inferior precepts to fill the place of the higher commands of mercy and truth. The Jews were required to pay a *tenth part* or tithe of all their property, for the support of the ministers of religion. The Levites had no part of the land of Canaan assigned to them in the original division of it. They were to serve as priests, to do religious service for all. Therefore Jehovah gave command that they should be supported by all in common. And He manifested His pleasure that it should be yielded to them with a liberal hand. Numb. xviii. 20–24. The tithes were paid in kind, an actual tenth of the year's increase; but when a Jew lived at a distance from Jerusalem, he was permitted to change it into money and bring that to the priests. Deut. xiv. 24, 25, 27, 29. They were to be liberal to the poor also, and to be blessed according to their piety and charity. How much more should a Christian give freely of his income for the honorable support of religion and for charities, since he lives under a more liberal dispensation. ¶ *Mint, anise and cummin.* Mint was the same plant which we now know by the name. The Jews scattered it on the floors of their synagogues. *Anise* was what we now call *dill*, an herb of strong aromatic smell; and *cummin*, a plant like our fennel. Is. xxviii. 25–27. They were all garden herbs of the least value, and specimens of the rigidness of the Pharisees. They were commanded to "*truly tithe all the increase of their seed*," and they strained their observance to the very letter of the law. Deut. xiv. 22. Our Lord condemns them, not for exact and scrupulous obedience in even such small matters, but for forgetting the greater. No man can safely disregard what it is fashionable to call minor matters or *mere externals*, if he is convinced that they are required of him, and provided that in obeying such, he still performs all other duties. ¶ *Judgment.* Justice to all men. See Is. i. 17–23. ¶ *Mercy.* They showed no mercy in exacting these lesser matters. ¶ *Faith.* Trust in God; an enlarged and unselfish belief in His nature and laws, which would have opened their minds to the true principles of piety. All material things are useful, as they are signs and vehicles to teach us the nature of justice and mercy toward men, and faith toward God. ¶ *These ought ye to have done.* We may not take it upon us to disregard habitually the least commandment which has the Divine sanction, because it may seem to us small. If any thing is a duty, neglect of it is a sin, and may become a great sin.

24. *Which strain at a gnat.* The old translation was better, "which *strain out* a gnat." The gnat was a small insect generated in wine or falling into it. The Pharisees reckoned it among the *unclean* animals. Lev. xi. 4. For fear, therefore, of moral contamination

Pharisees, hypocrites! [a]for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

26 *Thou* blind Pharisee, cleanse first that *which is* within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

27 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [b]for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead *men's* bones, and of all uncleanness.

28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

29 Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! [c]because ye build the tombs of the prophets,

a Lu. 11. 39.

b Lu. 11. 44; Acts 23. 3. *c* Lu. 11. 47.

they were exceeding careful to strain the liquids which they drank. *The camel* was a huge and unwieldy beast of burden, larger than an ox. The saying seems to have been a proverb. One similar is reported as common among the Arabs. "He swallowed an elephant, but was strangled by a flea." The intention is, by a verbal *exaggeration*, which is usual in proverbs, to describe a common but foolish custom. The Pharisee, whose conscience had pricked him and made him sad, if he had by chance swallowed a gnat, could yet go quietly and comfortably under the camel load of such sins as injustice, cruelty and impiety. He had wept at the shocking accident of failing to tithe a bundle of herbs, but could shout hoarsely, "His blood be on us and on our children," nor sleep the less soundly afterwards.

25. *Ye make clean the outside, &c.* Their vessels for food and drink. These they kept clean. But they did with themselves, as one who would carefully cleanse the outside of a cup and dish, while he left the part from which he took his food foul and unsightly. They appeared well to their countrymen, and deceived them as to their real characters. We see their inner depravity by the light of revelation. But they are warnings to us, that we neither be such, nor be deluded by such. We must purify the heart within us in the fear of God, and guard the outward habits, that they be in keeping with honesty and goodness there. ¶ *Full of extortion and excess.* The figure is carried out. *They*, the dishes, are full of extortion and excess, which the Pharisee swallowed down without scruple. Prov. xviii. 21. *Extortion* is the unjust wresting away the property or rights of others, by magistrates and rulers. *Excess*, like gluttony or intemperance, was the excessive wickedness which they showed, not dissimilar to the effects of wine.

26. *Cleanse first, &c.* If a man will cleanse first the heart, then all the life will soon be pure and pious. The heart has in it the issues of life. Prov. iv. 23. Let us beware how we reverse this law, and hope to reform men, by cleansing first the moral appearance and habits, before we aim at the heart. A drunkard reformed is a good work. But a scheme of reformation which goes on the direct *reverse* of this precept, is not a good thing, but is a false and infidel scheme, and certain to end in disappointment.

27. *Like unto whited sepulchres.* The last figure of speech taught a *voluntary uncleanness.* This shows the next step of a *reprobate condition.* They are dead in trespasses and sins. Those who will not serve God, will be at length given over by His Spirit to be only graves of all virtue: to themselves a shame, to others an offence or a pitfall. ¶ *Whited sepulchres.* See note ch. viii. 28. These tombs, which were made in the sides of rocks or otherwise, were kept whitewashed, in order that all men might avoid them. A sepulchre, or a corpse,

and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,

30 And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

31 Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which[a] killed the prophets.

32 Fill [b]ye up then the measure of your fathers.

33 *Ye* serpents, *ye* [c]generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell[‖]?

34 ¶ Wherefore behold, I send

a Acts 7. 51, 52; 1 Thes. 2. 15. *b* Gen. 15. 16; 1 Thes. 2. 16.

c Ch. 3. 7; & 12. 34. ‖ Or, *Gehenna.*

defiled a Jew. See Numb. xix. 16. The rabbis went so far as to mark with lime or chalk the ground under which the sepulchral caves extended. How awful a figure to show the condition of a dead soul. These men stood in the temple of God, rulers and guides of their nation, adorned outwardly with the scrupulous observances of the Mosaic ritual, yet within filled with a horrible iniquity, which no words can describe accurately, but such as offend.

29. *Ye build the tombs of the prophets.* Their malice corrupts even their acts of piety. They erected tombs over the prophets who had been slain. They garnished their sepulchres, making them white and beautiful outwardly, that men might bear in mind their virtues, and learn that they condemned the violence which killed them. Could it be possible that these same men should be meditating a similar crime; that they should do the same violence, to cause new tombs for other generations to garnish and honor? These tombs were in the valley of Jehoshaphat, south of the Holy City. Small chambers were cut in the steep cliffs, with niches at right angles from the central room, in which the bodies of the dead were deposited. Dead bodies were wrapped in clean linen cloths, with a quantity of aromatic spices, and placed in these rocky chambers without coffins.

31. *Ye be witnesses to yourselves.* They condemned the cruelty of their ancestors. They honored their tombs. But they were cherishing the hatred, which would lead them to the same violence against Jesus. They thus condemned themselves. It was easy for them to build and garnish the tomb of a dead prophet; but hard to obey the instructions of a living one. ¶ *Children of them, &c.* Children inherit the sentiments of their parents. The Pharisees inherited the hostility, violence, and oppression of their ancestors, in conspiring against Jesus. Acts vii. 51, 52.

32. *Fill ye up then, &c.* A sublime strain of prediction. It is not a command, but a warning. It takes the imperative form, to startle them by the sense of contradiction. We often use this form of words in earnest speech, and it is beyond measure eloquent in this discourse. "Go on, destroy Me, and My disciples. Seek to put down the Gospel. You will thus fill up the measure, and reach the limit of cruelty and bloodshed, beyond which the Divine vengeance will awake and overwhelm your nation." It is called *the measure of their fathers,* because, in temporal punishments, God visits the sins of the fathers upon the children, who inherit the same wicked dispositions, He looks upon nations as if they were individuals, and in finally punishing them, repays the sins of their ancestors, which the succeeding generations have not repented of and cast off.

33. *Ye serpents, &c.* They had the subtlety, and venom of the serpent. As one killed the body, so they destroyed the souls of men. Their malice was to destroy even their Messiah. The denunciation here rises to an appalling climax of woe. ¶ *Generation of vipers.* See notes, chap. iii. 7; and xii. 34. Men are not to imitate this language, for they have not the power of knowing all that is in the heart. The words which our

unto[a] you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and *some* of them ye shall kill[b] and crucify, and *some* of them shall ye [c]scourge in your synagogues, and persecute *them* from city to city:

35 [d]That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous [e]Abel, unto the [f]blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

36 Verily I say unto you, All

a Lu. 11. 49. *b* Acts 5. 40; & 7. 58, 59. *c* 2 Cor. 11. 24, 25. *d* Rev. 18. 24. *e* Gen. 4. 8. *f* 2 Chron. 24. 20, 21.

Lord used of these men, were justified by the result. This result He knew and forewarns them of it. But no Christian can assume the same knowledge and seize in his feeble, sinful hands the prerogatives of Divine vengeance. ¶ *Damnation of hell.* Gehenna. The condemnation to everlasting punishment. How could they escape it? Only by repentance and faith in Him, which they refused. This condemnation is anticipated in the gloomy despair of the lost, who are now reserved in chains of darkness. It really begins, when the body and soul are united again, after the resurrection. Let each one lay the words to heart, for the castigation of his own sinful passions, that he may learn to renounce the wicked deeds which lead men to this fearful end.

34. *Prophets and wise men, &c.* The first Christian Apostles and teachers. They were inspired by the Holy Ghost with gifts of prophecy and wisdom, to warn the people of their sins and danger. Ex. vii. 1; 1 Cor. xiv. 1, 34; John iv. 19. These were cruelly treated. The Jews stoned Stephen (Acts vii. 59), cut off James, or rather caused a cruel king to do it, to please them. Acts xii. 2. They scourged Peter and the Apostles (Acts v. 40), persecuted Paul and Barnabas from city to city, and doubtless many others whose names are written only in the martyrology of the Lamb's book of life. ¶ *Scourge.* See note, ch. x. 17. They did it. Acts xxii 19–24; 2 Cor. xi. 24. 25. ¶ *Persecute.* Wrongfully oppress and rage against. See note, ch. v. 10; Acts viii. 1.

35. *That upon you may come, &c.* There is a measure of guilt which nations cannot pass, without bringing down upon them all the accumulated woes of Divine vengeance. The Romans acted on a natural principle in devoting Jerusalem to total ruin; for they judged that a nation that could not be quiet in peace, and would not be warned by war, was beyond hope. It is a law of God, written in our natural reason, as well as in the Scripture, that one generation binds the burden of its sins upon the next, and leaves the payment of its crimes to those that follow. The man who abuses his body, transmits disease to his children; the one who squanders his property, bequeaths rags to his posterity, and the one who knowingly embraces error, leaves them to grope in ignorance and schisms. The individual by repentance may escape the final doom of sin, but seldom escapes these results here. And when these evils are common to a whole people, the trouble is aggravated in tenfold proportion, till neither heaven nor earth can withhold vengeance. So it happened to Sodom, to the Canaanites, to Ninevah, to Jerusalem, and so it will be with the world. ¶ *Righteous blood.* Blood of innocent persons. ¶ *Righteous Abel.* See Gen. iv. 8. ¶ *Zacharias the Son of Barachias.* There are various opinions concerning this person. 1. That he was a righteous man, slain just before the destruction of Jerusalem, and mentioned by Josephus. *De Bell, Jud.*, bk. iv. ch. 19. But the words do not agree to this. Our Lord says "whom ye slew," referring to the past. 2. The prophet Zechariah. But we have no mention of his death in the temple, and St. Jerome mentions a fact against it, that in the time of that pro-

these things shall come upon this generation.

37 O [a]Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee,[b] how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens[c] under *her* wings, and ye would not!

38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, [d]Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

a Lu. 13. 34. *b* Deut. 32. 11, 12. *c* Ps. 17. 8; & 91. 4. *d* Ch. 21. 9; Ps. 118. 26.

phet, there was scarcely the ruins of the temple to be found. It seems to be agreed therefore that, 3. He was the high-priest Zacharias, mentioned 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21. He reproved the people and was slain by the order of King Joash, between the sanctuary and the altar. It was a crime of blackest dye; for it was perpetrated in the very presence of the Almighty, and in defiance of the reverence due to Him, to His high-priest and His temple. He is called in the Old Testament, the son of Jehoida. Barachias may have been a second name. Abel and Zacharias are mentioned rather as the examples of different grades of crime, than from the exact order of time. ¶ *Between the temple and the altar.* This part of the temple was esteemed as a *sanctuary* to which even the most criminal (certain cases excepted, Ex. xxi. 12; 1 Kings ii. 28. 35) might flee for safety. Temples were reverenced by all the ancient nations. Even the heathen abhorred such a deed of violence.

36. *Upon this generation.* It was fulfilled about forty years afterwards. See notes, ch. xxiv.

37. *O Jerusalem, &c.* This is the solemn farewell of the Saviour over the city, after His last public address. He mourns over the nation and the city, where Jehovah had shown such love and mercy for generations. How touching, how pitiful! He sees the dark fate glooming over the city, and His final words are of tender mournfulness and mercy.

38. *Your house.* The temple. It is no longer God's house, it is *yours*. He has left it, and has no more claim in it.

¶ *Desolate.* Deserted by God. However it might be thronged by men or adorned with gifts, the Divine Presence was withdrawn: the day of its doom begun.

39. *Ye shall not, &c.* Ye who were angry at the words of the little children, welcoming Me into the temple, shall see Me no more, until My coming in terrific majesty, to avenge these wrongs; when happy will ye think yourselves if ye can then echo that chant. See Ro. xi. 25–32. *The public ministry* of the Saviour is finished with these words. The plots thickened against Him, and He kept aloof from the rulers, till they corrupted Judas and consummated their wickedness.

The above Scripture from verse 34 to the end is used as the holy Gospel for St. Stephen's Day, December 26. The account of his trial and death is found Acts vi. and vii. He was the first Christian martyr, and called therefore the Proto-martyr. His death happened about eleven months after the Crucifixion. The Collect sets before us in our prayers, his example, "that we in all our sufferings for the testimony of the truth, may steadfastly look up to heaven and by faith behold the glory that shall be revealed, and being filled with the Holy Ghost may learn to love and bless our persecutors."

CHAPTER XXIV.

1. *The destruction of the city and temple foretold, and, as by a type, the end of the world.* See Mark xiii. 1–37; Luke xxi. 5–36. *And Jesus went out.* As He was leaving the hill of Moriah, the disciples, as if to soften the effect of His words, spoke to Him of the magnifi-

CHAPTER XXIV.

Passion Week—Tuesday.

AND [a]Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to *him* for to shew him the buildings of the temple.

2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you,[b] There shall

a Mark 13. 1, &c.; Lu. 21. 5, &c.

b 1 Kings 9. 7; Jer. 26. 18; Mic. 3. 12.

cence of the temple, whereupon He foretells its speedy destruction. He was on His way to Bethany by the road winding over the mount of Olives. ¶ *The buildings of the temple.* St. Mark mentions particularly that they showed Him the *stones* of the temple, which were very large. It was a silent remonstrance against its destruction. The temple seemed a vast pile of buildings, viewing it from the path upon the mount of Olives. Josephus mentions some of the stones of its base as "forty-five cubits in length, five in height, and six in breadth. These were chiefly in the east wall, which rose from the valley to a prodigious height, with stones of great bulk and firmly compacted together, and made a grand appearance at a distance." They pointed out also their beauty, the "goodly stones and gifts." Luke xxi. 5. Bp. Porteus furnishes the true key to this somewhat difficult chapter. "This chapter contains one of the clearest and most important prophecies that is to be found in the Sacred writings; that which our blessed Lord delivered respecting the destruction of Jerusalem, to which the whole of this chapter in its primary acceptation refers. At the same time it must be admitted, that the forms of expression, and the images employed are, for the most part, applicable also to the day of judgment; and that an allusion to that great event, runs through almost every part of the prophecy. It is by no means uncommon in the prophetical writings, that two subjects, a principal and a subordinate one, should be carried on together. (See Is. lii.) In this manner our Saviour here seems to hold out the destruction of Jerusalem, which is His principal subject, *as a type of the destruction of the world*, which is the under part of the representation. This general remark is a key to the whole prophecy, and will afford an easy solution to several difficulties which occur in it." The fall of the city is, as Bp. Warburton has it, "*a speaking hieroglyphic.*"

2. *There shall not be left one stone upon another.* Nothing could seem more improbable than this prediction. In the punishments of the nation, the temple, under every reverse and change of fortune, had survived. It had been robbed, destroyed, its building delayed. It had been desecrated, had fallen into the hands of various heathen powers, and yet it rose and remained, stately, vital, and seemingly eternal. As if founded on the true Rock of Ages, it was based in the solid rock of Mount Moriah, and seemed, in its haughty beauty, to defy the powers of man. The nation though subdued was at peace. The Romans respected the temple, and to the last sought to save it. Yet the true Rock had left it. Its real strength was gone. Forty years after this a Roman army under Titus destroyed it, and later, Terentius Rufus, who was left in Palestine, ordered its site to be torn up by the ploughshare. (See Micah. iii. 12.) Eusebius the Christian historian, two centuries later, tells us that he saw it lying in ruins. And now the mosk of Omar, sacred in the eyes of the infidel Moslems, occupies its site, and neither Jew nor Christian is allowed, on pain of death, to intrude upon the summit of the mountain. The conflagration of the temple, begun by a Roman soldier without orders, occurred on the month and day of the year, on which it had been formerly destroyed by the Babylonian armies. It had been from the first a sacred type of God's plan of action on the great stage of the world. In the solemn scenes here foretold and

not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

3 ¶ And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us,[a] when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of thy

[a] 1 Thes. 5. 2. [b] Eph. 5. 6; 2 Thes. 2. 3.

coming, and of the end of the world?

4 And Jesus answered and said unto them,[b] Take heed that no man deceive you.

5 For [c]many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

[c] 1 John 4. 1.

almost exactly echoed by the Jewish historian, in recording the event, we may catch the solemn undertone of that last conflagration and destruction of the world. St. John, the only Evangelist who wrote after the fall of the city, does not record this prediction. Thus carefully has the Spirit of inspiration guarded the character of the sacred writers, and prevented the suspicions of unbelievers.

3. *And as He sat upon the Mount of Olives.* It rose to the east of the temple, commanding a full view of its sacred buildings, and of the whole city. ¶ *The disciples came to Him privately.* Four of them did this, Peter, James, John and Andrew. Mark xiii. 3. The former words had been said, as they were walking, to all the disciples. The four now seek Him privately to ask the meaning. ¶ *When shall these things be?* From Mark and Luke, it seems that the questions proposed were, *when* and by *what signs* shall we know that these things will happen? St. Matthew records three separate questions. The disciples could have had very vague notions of the end of the world; and Bishop Pearce, with some justice, would translate their question, "What shall be the sign of *the end of the age*, or Jewish dispensation?" But we may reasonably suppose Jesus to answer the question in its fulness, and that the language of the chapter is a full reply, according to prophetic rules, of these three queries: When shall the temple be destroyed? What will be the sign of Thy coming in Glory? What will be the sign of the end of the world? It is a law of music that if a note be struck clearly every string which is in unison will vibrate with it: and in that sublimer harp of prophecy, to which the divine chants of the future were uttered, the same law holds good. The note struck most clearly is the answer to the first question, but every ear must catch the under swell of the diapason, that replies, as by an unison note, to the other two inquiries. Jerusalem was a grand dramatic type and symbol of grander mysteries from first to last. There Melchisedec had met Abraham: Abraham had offered Isaac; David had seen the hand of the destroying angel stayed; and true to the character, her end portrays in shadows the final doom of the earth. ¶ *The sign of Thy coming.* That sign which was foretold by the prophets. See note, ch. xii. 38.

4. *Take heed.* A solemn warning to call attention to what follows. The disciples would have an intense interest in it. They must lay it to heart. See 2 Thes. ii. 3.

5. *Many shall come in My name.* Not in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, but claiming to be the true Messiah. ¶ *I am Christ.* The Messiah, to restore all things and give safety to the people. The fears and sufferings of the nation in the time to come would offer the greatest temptations to some to pretend to be Messiah, and to others to trust in their pretensions. These false Christs were different from the false prophets, verse 11. The latter did not claim such high power as the former. Theudas was a false prophet. He persuaded the ignorant people to follow him to the river Jordan, where he was cut off with many of them. There was an Egyptian, a false prophet, who deceived to their destruction no less than 30,000 people.

6 And ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

7 For nation[a] shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places.

8 All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

a Is. 19. 2.

On the other hand Simon Magus claimed to be the Son of God and deceived many. Dositheus the Samaritan pretended to be the Christ. Josephus tells us that in the latter years of Jerusalem the land was overrun with seducers and impostors of this sort. St. Jerome has this note: "One of them of whom He speaks was Simon of Samaria, of whom we read in the Acts of the Apostles, that he gave himself out to be the great Power, leaving these things written in his works, 'I am the word of God, I am the Almighty, I am all things of God.' The Apostle John in his epistle (1 Ep. ii. 18) says, 'Ye have heard that antichrist should come, and even now there are many antichrists.' I suppose all heresiarchs to be antichrists, and under the name of Christ to teach those things which are contrary to Christ."

6. *And ye shall hear of wars, &c.* This was exactly fulfilled. The Roman empire composed of discordant materials, "iron mixed with miry clay" (Dan. ii. 43), was about to crumble to pieces. Ambitious men seized the imperial throne one after the other. In less than two years four had held it, Nero, Otho, Galba and Vitellius. The whole empire was continually convulsed. Judea participated in it. We should be compelled to transcribe Josephus, if we pretended to tell of these wars No period can be conceived more intolerable for the Jews than those years. ¶ *The end is not yet.* The end of the city will not follow upon these distant wars. Trouble must come nearer and more fearful punishments follow.

7. *And there shall be famines.* The punishment of God should intervene. The heavens should refuse rain and the parched earth not yield her increase. Then should follow the multiplied horrors which result from famine; one of which is a *pestilence*, occasioned by the want of food. Four famines are mentioned in the reign of Claudius. The first, in the fourth year of his reign, oppressed, says Eusebius, the whole Roman Empire, but especially Palestine, so that many perished for want of food. Acts xi. 28. Want, starvation, and a gloomy sense of coming woes, made the nation desperate, and the most violent convulsions were common. ¶ *Pestilences.* These, especially in hot countries, follow a famine as a natural effect. They are fearful visitations of disease, which in the East have been known at times to sweep off immense multitudes. No punishment can be more horrible than war, famine and pestilence combined, unless we add, as in the case of the Jews, civil and religious feuds. Two pestilences are recorded as raging in Judea before the year A. D. 66. ¶ *Earthquakes.* The learned Grotius reckons up many earthquakes which happened in the reigns of Claudius and Nero at Crete, Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, Samos, Laodicea, Hierapolis and Colosse, in all which places were Jews living. There happened in Judea, says Josephus, "vehement winds, violent thunderings and lightnings, and vast movings of the shaken earth, which in the judgment of all portended no small evil." The famous overthrow of the city of Pompeii occurred. If these things were only types and feeble pictures of the last days, who can stand before the coming of the "great and dreadful day of the Lord," in its full and final majesty?

8. *The beginning of sorrows.* The first pangs which foretell the more fearful troubles. The metaphor is the same in John xvi. 21.

9. *They shall deliver you.* They had

9 Then[a] shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

11 And many [b]false prophets shall rise, and shall [c]deceive many.

12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

13 But he[d] that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

a Ch. 10. 17. *b* Ch. 7. 15; Acts 20. 29. *c* 1 Tim. 4. 1. *d* Ch. 10. 22; Heb. 3. 6, 14; Rev. 2. 10.

been warned against spiritual dangers from false Christs, verse 5. They are now warned of physical sufferings. The Jews, at their worst, would not forget to persecute. Enthusiasts persuaded the people that these calamities were caused by the anger of God at the rising sect of Christians, and that the only mode of appeasing Him, was to exterminate them. The first Christians, though delivered from the curses of God on the nation, were drawn in by the whirlpool of human passions, and made to suffer the severest persecutions. The book of the Acts abounds with such facts. Tacitus informs us of a fearful persecution raised by Nero against the Christians. ¶ *Ye shall be hated of all nations, &c.* The reason is well expressed by Bp. Warburton: "While the different pagan religions sociably agreed with each other, the Gospel taught Christians, not only, like the Jews, to bear their testimony to the falsehood of them all, but also zealously and earnestly to urge on men the renunciation of them, as a matter of absolute necessity, and as requiring them, under the most tremendous penalties, to embrace the Christian religion." ¶ *For My name's sake.* The early Christians suffered only for their religion. In most cases it was the only charge made against them, and recantation would have saved their lives. Heb. x. 32, 33; 1 Thess. ii. 14, 15.

10. *Many shall be offended, &c.* Weak Christians would be terrified at the calamities which would arise, and would deny the faith. See note, ch. xiii. 21. Persecution separates the wheat from the chaff, and purifies the Church. See 1 John, ii. 19. ¶ *Shall betray one another.* Christians should be betrayed by parents, brethren, kinsfolk and friends. Luke xxi. 16. The elements of discord had crept into the Church before the Apostles were dead. The Church suffered from "perils among *false brethren*" (2 Cor. vii. 5; xi. 26); apostates betrayed the true Christians. These evils continued for three centuries, until the conversion of Constantine brought peace.

11. *Many false prophets.* False teachers and pretenders in the Church. See v. 5. The persecutions would, for the time, injure Church authority. The Bishops would not be able to maintain discipline. False prophets, i. e. not only pretenders to knowledge of the future, but also heretical teachers, would arise and corrupt the simple. See 2 Tim. ii. 17; 2 Cor. xi. 1, &c. From verse 8 to 26th, the Saviour gives directions concerning the Church.

12. *And because iniquity, &c.* Sin and lawlessness of every kind would prevail. Said Josephus, "That age among the Jews abounded with all iniquity, so that none was left undone. Yea, though one endeavored to invent some new villainy, yet could he invent none that was not then practised." Many Christians were tempted to compromise with the world, and adopt some half false religion, or *heresy*. These heresies did more to injure and distress the Church, than all the opposition of unbelievers. They chilled the love of many who fell into their snares, and marred the unity and purity of the Church. These heresies are rebuked in the Epistles to the seven Churches. Rev. chs. ii. and iii.

14 And this gospel[a] of the kingdom shall be preached in all the [b]world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

15 When ye, therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso [d]readeth, let him understand,)

a Ch. 4. 23; & 9. 35. *b* Rom. 10. 18; Col. 1. 6, 23.

c Dan. 9. 27; & 12. 11. *d* Dan. 9. 23, 25.

13. *The same shall be saved.* So Luke xxi. 18. "But there shall not a hair of your head perish." This promise foretells the remarkable event which occurred in the Fall of Jerusalem; the escape of the entire body of Christians. The Roman general Cestius invested the city, and was about to take it, when he suddenly withdrew his army in a manner so unaccountable, that all parties were amazed. After this event Josephus says that "many of the most illustrious Jews departed from the city, as from a sinking ship." The Christians, seeing the signal appointed them (Luke xxi. 20-22), fled to Pella, a city of Decapolis, concealed among the mountains. This flight occurred in October, and not *in the winter*. This was the only time when Jerusalem was not thenceforth *compassed with armies*. The same refuge will be provided for all faithful Christians in that final destruction of the world. The Church is their Zoar, their Pella, their Ark:

> "And when the waves of ire
> Again the earth shall fill,
> The Ark shall ride the sea of fire;
> Then rest on Zion's hill." *Hymn* 24.

14. *This gospel of the kingdom.* It is so called here, as fulfilling the prophecy of Dan. ii. 44, and taking the place of the Jewish nation, which had been hitherto the witness to the true God. Before the one passed away for ever, the other must be spread abroad, and rooted in the minds of men everywhere. ¶ *In all the world.* Not in *orbe terrarum*, the round earth, then for the most part unknown; but as the Greek word signifies, *the inhabited world* as then known. See note, Luke ii. 1. For all the purposes of giving the Christian Church a wide and firm basis, before the old stock of Judaism was cut off, the prophecy was exactly fulfilled. The Apostles testify that the news of Christ had been sent to almost every known country. Col. i. 6, 23; Rom. i. 8; xv. 19, 24-28; Gal. i. 17. St. Paul visited Arabia, went from Jerusalem to Lycaonia, to Galatia, was in Crete, Italy, Spain, Gaul and Britain, as is believed. He was only one of thirteen Apostles, and seventy presbyters. The converts spread the news, so that it is altogether probable, that the Gospel had been heard in all the principal countries of the world, before the fall of Jerusalem. The adherence to the exact letter of the prophecy, is not, however, necessary. The new kingdom was set up and received its permanent form within the thirty years prescribed. The full force of the words reaches beyond the type, to find interpretation in the antitype. God will not destroy the earth, before His Gospel has been offered to all men.

15. *The abomination of desolation.* Or we may render it *an abominable desolator*. The word *abominable* implies in the Hebrew use, *the sins of idolatry*. This sign was the standards of the Roman army, which bore the marks and emblems of their idolatry. The frequency of their victories, and the severity which was to follow this one over the city of Jerusalem, gave them a right to be called *the desolating*. St. Luke has given the meaning of these words, "when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies" then flee, &c. Luke xxi. 20. ¶ *Spoken of by Daniel the prophet.* Dan. ix. 26, 27; xi. 31; xii. 11. ¶ *Standing where it ought not.* The city and its environs were esteemed sacred. When the Christians should see the Roman eagles about to invest the city, they must leave it. During the awful confusion of the sack of the city, the Romans brought their glittering standards to the east gate of

16 Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains:

17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:

18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

19 And wo [a]unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath-day:

21 For then shall be [b]great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

[a] Lu. 23. 29.

[b] Deut. 28. 51–62; Dan. 12. 1; Joel 2. 2.

the temple, and offered sacrifices to them, in thanksgiving for their victory. This was the last act of pollution predicted by Daniel. ¶ *Let him that readeth understand.* That is, whoso readeth this prophecy of Daniel, let him give it such careful thought as to understand the times and events of the future, which he has marked out.

16. *Flee into the mountains.* The angels said the same to Lot: "Escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." Gen. xix. 17. The Christians found refuge in the mountain ranges of Pella. Armies avoid a rough mountain country. In mountains were also natural hiding-places. David had found such in his times of peril. 1 Sam. xiii. 6; xxii. 1; Ps. xi 1.

17. *On the housetop.* See note, ch. ix. 2. Flee quickly, as they who neglect every thing, so they may save their lives. The houses of Palestine were built with flat roofs, and with a staircase running down into the chief entrance, so that they could leave them without passing into any of the rooms. The roofs were often used for prayer, or in the warm months for sleeping. Christians were not to regard this as a literal command; but this language was used to prevent any lingering when the crisis came.

18. *To take his clothes.* Such as he had left off, when he went out to work. The Jews laid aside the upper robe when they engaged in labor. But in journeys they always wore it, girding it around their loins. The disciples must not stop to make preparations for the journey, nor linger to take care of property, but must leave all and fly.

20. *But pray ye.* The event was certain, yet the circumstances might be mitigated. Nothing would now put off the destruction of the city, for the Jewish nation would not repent. They must pray that the time might be favorable. In all troubles, prayer will either lighten them, or give us grace to endure. 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9. ¶ *Be not in winter.* It was in the month of October. The winter months were cold and dangerous to such a party of fugitives, made up in part of weak women, invalids and children. ¶ *On the Sabbath.* The gates of Jewish cities were shut on the Sabbath. Neh. xiii. 19–22. Or the Jews would hinder them. Ex. xvi. 29. A Sabbath day's journey was only five furlongs. The Christians of Jerusalem observed the Mosaic law until after the fall of the city. That this style must be interpreted in the larger sense, as insisting simply on promptness and haste, may be seen from the history of the city. Cestius left the walls of Jerusalem in October. It was not till *eighteen months* afterward that the armies of Vespasian again came in sight of the city. In the mean time the fearful civil feud of Simon and John of Gischala had made the city a scene of bloodshed. But such is the sloth of the human heart in spiritual things, and the dangers of procrastination, that our Lord was imperative for haste.

21. *For there shall be great tribulation.* These words are literally true. Such a complication of horrible circumstances had never, and will never occur, as were then experienced by the Jews. Of course, larger numbers of men and women have

22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: [a]but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

23 Then if any man shall say

[a] Is. 65. 8, 9.

died by each or any of the causes mentioned. But we may well take the word of Him who knew all the history of man, for whom He died; that no misery equal to it *in degree* has ever occurred. The famine, pestilence, discord and madness of their leaders, the loss of faith in every thing, the despair of help, the fighting and bloodshed within the city and without, the iron crushings of the great serpent-like army which contracted its coils in slow but merciless destruction; the superstitious horrors occasioned by mad prophets and terrified priests; all these and many other things form truly "the bloodiest picture in the book of time." "Our city," said Josephus, "of all those subjected to the Romans, was raised to the highest felicity, and was thrust down again to the lowest depth of misery; for if the misfortunes of all from the beginning of the world were compared with those of the Jews, they would appear much inferior on comparison." Only *two events* can be compared with it by the Christian, for only two were acts of Divine wrath—the Deluge and the overthrow of the cities of the plain. If we allow that in the one case more died, and in the other by a quicker death, yet do the protracted agonies of the Jews, till a whole nation were wrought up to look on death as a blessing, till all the ties of nature were outraged, far exceed the easy death of drowning—the sudden suffocation of sulphurous fumes. Says Dr. Jarvis: "All three were intended as proofs of God's unrivalled sovereignty. All were chastisements salutary to His covenant people, and terrible to His adversaries. They were progressive in their character, as portions and ensamples of that Divine government by which the whole world is regulated. The last was the most dreadful prototype which God has yet laid before the eyes of men, of that 'final judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries.' Heb. x. 27." For this reason it was that when our Lord predicted the destruction of Jerusalem, He blended His description with that of His last coming to judge the world. It may be also for this reason that the prophets made the valleys of Jehoshaphat and Hinnom the scenes of the last judgment, and the final punishment of the wicked. The threat of this very destruction of the nation had been made from the first by Moses, and, as it were, woven into the very conditions of the Jewish covenant, and recorded, Deut. xxviii. The curses, the woes, the unnatural crimes denounced there were all paralleled in the records of Josephus, until the mind sickens and turns away from their contemplation. One million three hundred and fifty thousand of the Jews were put to death in and around the city. For they had crowded to the city to attend the Passover, and were caught there by the Roman armies. Thus was the blood which had been invoked at another Passover, required at their hands. Ninety-seven thousand were sold into slavery, thus blotting out the name of the nation from the records of history.

22. *And except those days should be shortened.* Titus determined to reduce the city by famine, a long and destructive mode of conquest, and for this purpose he surrounded it with a wall and ditch. But after completing his preparations, news from Rome urged him to hasten. He changed his plan, and pressed the city by assault, that he might return to Rome, where his presence was needed. After most extraordinary exertions, he carried the city by assault. Again; there was in Jerusalem a party of madmen, called zealots, who in their blind zeal accomplished its destruction, by burning the outer porches and cloisters of the temple buildings. If the destruction of Jerusalem had not been hastened, it truly appeared as if no

unto you, Lo, here *is* Christ, or there; believe *it* not.

24 For there shall arise [a]false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders,[b] insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

a 2 Thes. 2. 9-11.

b Rev. 13. 13.

flesh, i. e. none of the inhabitants of the land of Judea, would have escaped death. The country was overrun with bands of sicarii or assassins, named from a short curved dagger (sica) which they carried under their cloaks, who murdered men in every direction. Bands of robbers ravaged the country, and so long as the war lasted, the government of the provinces was at an end. ¶ *But for the elect's sake.* For the safety of the Christian portion of the Jewish nation. The word *elect*, in this place, is equivalent to *Christian*, i. e. a person baptized and living in obedience to the laws of the Church. It does not signify that such had any hereditary peerage in the Church, guarded by an indefeasible right of decrees registered in secret. They could lose their election. 2 Pet. i. 10; Heb. vi. It here means the body of Christians, without reference to metaphysical and Calvinian questions. For their sakes the time was shortened. For the good of His Church, God continually overrules the events of history, as He did in old times for His elect people, the Jews. The treasures of His grace are offered freely to all men. Every child knows that "God the Son redeemed him *and all mankind.*" See note, ch. xx. 16.

23. *Lo, here is Christ, &c.* The disciples expected the end of the world to follow the destruction of the holy city. They would be looking for Christ to come as soon as the city was destroyed. It was necessary to give them this caution, that they might not be led away by deceivers. And as we ponder the shadowy outlines of this prophecy, "the burden" of the typical and real end of the world; in the former of which Christ came in *power*, in the latter of which He will come in person, we see the necessity of this caution, that Christians should "in patience possess their souls," and wait the issue of events.

24. *False Christs, false prophets.* Jesus had warned them against impostors who would arise before the siege of the city. He now repeats the warning against such as would appear during and after it. Deceivers would arise, promising great things, and founding their pretensions upon the very words of Christ with such skill as to deceive many, yea, almost convincing the Christians, who believed in Christ already come. ¶ *Shall show great wonders.* They shall make a show or pretence of miracles. The spirits of devils, we read in the Revelation, should *work miracles*, to deceive the nations (xvi. 14), as also the "false prophet." (Ch. xix. 20.) Satan has imitated every part of the true religion. The imitations are frauds. The false prophets would be known by pretending that Christ was here or there, that is, not openly showing Himself, as Jesus had done, but seeking seclusion and darkness. Their pretended miracles would also be done in the dark, by jugglery and stratagem, and then boasted of publicly. ¶ *If it were possible, they shall deceive, &c.* This is not any arbitrary impossibility, but one grounded on the reason and nature of things. The Christians who were faithful and true to their profession and practice, would not be deceived, because the soundness of mind, of a true creed, and a sincere piety, would save them from deception. 1 Tim. iii. 9. Heresy, pride of opinion and error of practice, will render any man living, liable to be blown about by every wind of false doctrine. Eph. iv. 14. The whole Church cannot fall away.

25. *Behold, &c.* You are forewarned; be careful that ye be not deceived. St. Mark has it, *Take ye heed.* Ch. xiii. 23. Says St. Gregory, "As darts, when foreseen, are less likely to hit, Jesus adds this. He announces the woes which are to *precede the destruction of the world*, that when they come,

25 Behold, I have told you before.

26 Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, *he is* in the secret chambers; believe *it* not.

27 For as the lightning[a] cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

28 For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the [b]eagles be gathered together.

a Zech. 9. 14.

b Job 39. 30; Deut. 28. 49.

they may alarm the less, from having been foreknown."

26. *Behold, He is in the desert.* Our Lord points out the arts of deceivers in advance. Josephus tells us "that many impostors and magicians persuaded the people to follow them to the desert, where they promised to show them signs and wonders done of God." The same imposture has been repeated in this day, in the delusions and tricks of the Mormons. ¶ *In the secret chambers.* They would pretend that He had come, but had concealed Himself in some place for caution against the Romans, until the moment of deliverance came. During the siege of the city a false prophet persuaded the people to the number of six thousand, to go to the temple and behold signs of deliverance. They all perished.

27. *For as the lightning, &c.* St. Chrysostom says: "As He had described in what guise Antichrist should come, so here He describes how He Himself shall come. For as the lightning needeth none to herald or announce it, but is in an instant of time visible throughout the whole world, even to those who are sitting in their chambers, so the coming of Christ shall be seen every where at once, because of the brightness of His glory." The rapidity and destruction of the Roman armies was a type of this final coming. In that former event, Christ came *by power*, to foreshadow the future coming *in person*. This text refers to both events, the one being the *typical drama* of the other, and so, called the coming of the Son of Man. The next verse shows it to contain the former event, while the force of the words irresistibly compels us to bring under them the latter. Compare Zech. ix. 14; xiv. 4; and Ezek. xliii. 2. This language has been thought, by at least an innocent tradition of the Church in all ages, to mark *the direction* from which the Sun of Righteousness shall arise. It is one of those sacred feelings which lend a grace to the Christian's faith. The temple of Solomon faced the east. Through its rent vails the glory departed thither. On the east of the temple lay Olivet, from which Jesus ascended. Thence, Zechariah says, He will come again. Churches have been built in every age, that the worshippers may face the east. The Christian dead are buried the world over that they may rise without delay, to witness the second Advent of Jesus, as He was seen to go. We reverence the feeling which has vibrated in so many pious souls. As the writer's pen glides over this page (Dec. 31, 1851), a single flash of lightning, the only one of the winter, has flashed from the ocean at the east; and the heavy thunder is reverberating among the gloomy pines and cotton plantations for many a league around. Sudden, awful, tremendous will be the array of that last day. Reader, prepare to meet it, before it is too late.

28. *Wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered, &c.* These words reach back to the chapter of Deuteronomy (ch. xxviii. 49) which had foretold this fall as a punishment of the broken law: "*The* LORD *shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand.*" Thus 800 years before the existence of the city Rome, their very standards, looks, and language had been foretold. It is remarkable that

29 ¶ Immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened, and the[a] moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:[b]

30 And then shall appear the

a Is. 13. 10; Ez. 32. 7; Joel 2. 10, 31; Acts 2. 20.

b 2 Pet. 3. 10.

the soldiers of Vespasian's army in Judea was composed principally of Gauls, Britons, and Spaniards, who came "from far, from the end of the earth." The Roman standards bore the symbol of the emperors, *the eagle*, the mythologic bird of Jupiter Capitolinus; and their courage, ambition, and insatiable avarice corresponded well with the known habits of that bird. Wherever there was a "*body fallen*" (for the Greek means only this), wherever there was a weak nation, or a wealthy city, from which gold could be extorted, no matter how far or difficult of access, there were these eagle standards to be seen. So wherever the body of an animal fell, however secret the spot or desert the place, there were the eagles to be found scenting it from afar. It had probably passed into a proverb. It may be said that the eagle does not feed on dead bodies, which is true. But the Jews and Greeks made no such distinction of the word. The word *eagle*, in both languages, includes the whole tribe, for the same rapacity is common to all, though only the vultures feed on carrion. Travellers tell us that when an animal dies in the desert, there will be seen a speck in the horizon. The far-scenting vulture has discovered its meal from an immense distance. The same thing is seen in our own Southern States. If an animal lies down to die, even in the most secret covert of the swamp, though not a vulture is to be seen in the sky, it will hardly breathe its last before they are flocking from every quarter around it. This is a merciful provision of Providence. And terrible as was the fall of Jerusalem, and the future ruin of the wicked will be, each was planned in mercy. For the good of the creation, God has made the law that all things which offend shall be destroyed. The very Greek word *Hell* is expressive of this, being *Gehenna*, the valley of Hinnom, where all the carcasses and filth of Jerusalem were thrown, that they might be destroyed, without causing pestilence in the city. See also Rev. xxii. 14, 15.

29. *The sun be darkened, &c.* This language must be explained by the rules of prophetic writing: and the law of interpreting it should be, that the various parts of it are figurative warnings of that final day when the language shall be fully satisfied. For as all things are present to the Spirit of God, which inspired the prophets, the former event to which the prophet referred, and the last of all, are combined in the same words. Isaiah predicted the fall of Babylon: "For the stars and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine." Is. xiii. 10. So of Tyre, xxiv. 23. Of Idumea, xxxiv. 4. See I. 3; li. 6; lx. 19, 20. The harp of prophecy uttered the sublimest Oriental poetry, that by these sublime expressions the awful note of final doom might begin to roll its thunders beneath the revelation of grace. The fall of the nations echoed, in the prophetic style, against the confines of a future eternity, and each one was made a warning of future doom. Jesus adopts this style, and describes the fall of the Jewish city and nation, in terms that pass beyond it, to the final doom of the world. It is in this connection that Bp. Warburton says, "In ancient hieroglyphic writings the sun, moon, and stars were used to represent states and empires, kings, queens and nobility: their eclipse or extinction denoted temporary disaster or entire overthrow." And he adds, "So the prophets seem to have used them: in reality the prophetic style seems to be a *speaking hieroglyphic*." The reader

[a]sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn,[b] and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

31 And he shall send his angels with a [‖]great sound of a trumpet, and they shall [c]gather together his elect from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other.

32 Now learn a parable of the fig-tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer *is* nigh:

a Dan. 7. 13. *b* Ch. 16. 27; & 25. 31, &c.

‖ Or, *with a trumpet and a great voice.*
c Ch. 13. 41; 1 Cor. 15. 52.

must look on the fall of Jerusalem as one looking into a camera obscura, to see the lineaments of a sad, wild scene, before which the imagination fails. The Apocalypse or Revelation is judged by the best divines to be a *running commentary* on this chapter, and in the same manner representing the one event—the fall of Jerusalem, as a vehicle of the other, the end of all things; even as one chanting the judgment hymn *Dies irae*, who would hear *by faith* the far-off deep thunders of the archangel's trump mingling with his music.

30. *The sign of the Son of man?* See note, ch. xii. 38. In the destruction of the city, it will be seen that the Son of man has come. For as the one covenant could not end until the other was established, as the sacrifice in the temple could not cease, till the one true Sacrifice for sins had been offered up, therefore the end of the former proved the coming of the latter. The fall of the holy city is here expressly declared to be the sign of Christ, not only proving that He has come, but reaching onwards by a figure to His second coming. See Rev. i. 7; 2 Pet. iii. 7, 10, 12.

31. *Angels.* See note, ch. xviii. 10. They are represented as the messengers and servants of God, conducting the affairs of His spiritual kingdom and the various powers of creation. What things seem to the natural eye depending solely on what are called *natural causes*, which is a word to express something *unknown*, are seen by the eye of faith to be carried into their effects by intelligent ministers. Gen. xix. 1–15; 2 Kings vi. 17; Ps. lxviii. 17; Acts vii. 53; Heb. xii. 22. In the great harvest of the latter day, the angels will first gather the saints of God together, so that none shall be lost. Ch. xiii. 39; 2 Thess. i. 7. ¶ *Elect.* See note, ch. xx. 16. ¶ *With a great sound of a trumpet.* The margin saith: Or, "*with a trumpet and a great voice*," perhaps in deference to the words of St. Paul. 1 Thess. iv. 16. "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a *shout*, with the voice of the Archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first." These words refer us to the scenes of Sinai. As the angels gathered on its summit for the giving the law, the people heard "the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud." Ex. xix. 16. So the same trump will assemble men to answer before God how they have kept that law. The great convocations of the Jews were called together by the trumpet. Num. x. 10. And the beginning of the year was thus heralded. Lev. xxiii. 24, 25. Theodoret explains these words as referring to the scenes and sounds of Mount Sinai. See 1 Cor. xv. 52. ¶ *From the four winds.* From every quarter of the globe. See Ezek. xxxvii. 9; Is. xliii. 5, 6. The dead in Christ are assured of their resurrection. In the ice of the poles, the trackless seas, the islands and continents, no matter how remote from men, or how little known their deaths,

"God hath charged His angel legions,
Watch and ward o'er them to keep."

32. *A parable.* See ch. xiii. 3. Learn *an analogy*, or a truth similar to this future fact, from the fig tree, and your common rules of forming an opinion of it. Thus *Bp. Horsley:* "The approach of summer, says our Lord, is not more surely indicated by the first appearance

33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, *even* at the doors.

34 Verily I say unto you, This generation[a] shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

35 Heaven and earth shall pass away,[b] but my words shall not pass away.

a Ch. 23. 36. *b* Is. 51. 6.

36 ¶ But of that day and hour knoweth [c]no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

37 But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

38 For as in the days[d] that were before the flood, they were eating

c Acts 1. 7; 1 Thes. 5. 2; 2 Pet. 3. *d* Gen. 6. 2.

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of spring, than *the final destruction of the wicked* by the beginnings of vengeance on this impenitent people. The opening of the vernal blossom is the first step of the summer fruits; and the rejection of the Jews, and the adoption of the believing Gentiles, is the first step in the execution of a general plan of Providence, *which will end in the general judgment.*" This was said on the Mount of Olives, with fig trees around the company.

33. *It is near, &c.* As you know by the swelling buds and leaves of the fig tree, that the course of causes which produce summer is begun, so judge of this destruction of Jerusalem, that your redemption and complete entrance into the Christian economy has begun. St. Luke says, "*your redemption draweth nigh*," and "*the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.*" Luke xxi. 31. The Christian Church was not entirely disenthralled from the Jewish, until after this event. And the course of it beginning then, looks on to the end, as if but a day intervened between the two.

34. *This generation.* This race of Jews. There are men living who shall see these things fulfilled. They occurred about *forty years* after this prophecy. See note, ch. xvi. 28. ¶ *Till all these things be fulfilled.* All as far as they refer to Jerusalem. While history informs us that they did so take place, in the allotted time, it shows us that their fuller sense and meaning has not yet been fulfilled. We cite two instances of the very same law of prophetic language. Gen. ii. 17. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Yet Adam's life was nine hundred and thirty years. The language combines both the day of his eating, in which he died spiritually, and began the course of death (Ro. v. 12), and the day nine centuries after, when he actually expired, as if they were one day. Isaiah foretold the birth of Jesus from a Virgin, yet adds a prophecy which confines it to his own generation. Is. vii. 14–17. He combines the type and antitype in the same words, just as the eye embraces in the same angle of vision, the small object which is near, and the grander one which is distant. David speaks of the Messiah under the type of Solomon. Words and events, new kingdoms and dynasties are but the prophetic alphabet for spelling out the Divine plan.

35. *Heaven and earth shall pass.* The things which now seem changeless and eternal will fail. But not one word of what I have now told you will fail of accomplishment.

36. *But of that day and that hour.* Of the exact season and year of this, it is not a part of the Divine plan, that any created man should be informed. Certainty as to the date, would nullify the whole effect of the prophecy. For the grand moral drawn from it, was *watch and pray.* Had Jesus told them, "Forty years from now on such a day, &c.," they would have been inclined to indolence. Therefore our Saviour has given it as a rule, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power." Acts i. 7. So of death; we know it is certain to come, and see the signs of it.

and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away: so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

41 Two *women shall be* grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

42 ¶ Watch [a]therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

43 But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

[a] Ch. 25. 13; 2 Pet. 3. 11, 14.

The uncertainty of the hour, leads us to watch and pray. So of the judgment. It may come instantly—come it must. The soul excites itself by the thought to diligence. How mistaken then are the foolish schemes which have deluded men, by pretending to fix the exact date of the end of this world. 2 Thes. ii. 2. ¶ *Neither the angels.* Some few Latin and Greek copies added "*Neither the Son.*" See notes, Mark xiii. 32.

37. *Noe.* Greek form of the word *Noah.* See Gen. vi.–ix. He gives another caution. The world would go on in all its business, sins, pleasures, even as it did in Noah's day. Christians would feel impatient at the *unchangeableness* in the appearance of things. Unbelievers would scoff. See 2 Peter iii. 2–10. 15, 17.

39. *Knew not. Know* in Scripture often signifies to know believingly and profitably. They knew that Noah preached of it, but they ridiculed him, and perished. ¶ *So shall also the coming, &c.* The people of Noah's day, ridiculed the idea of a flood. They of Jerusalem could as little imagine a destruction of their fair city. In like manner, sinful men and infirm Christians will be filled with cares and pleasures of earth, till the last day. The archangel's trump will sound strangely in the revelry of the bridal, the crash of the battle, the hum of the factory—the noise of the great city. It will come suddenly on a rolling world, unprepared for it, after every warning.

40. *Taken.* Tyndale and Cranmer have it, "The one shall be *received.*" He shall be taken by the angels to be saved. The other is to be left to destruction.

42. *Two women, &c.* The grinding by handmills, still common in the East, as also on the plantations of our Southern States, was done in those days by women. It is not a very laborious occupation, and consisted with their indoor habits. The mills are made of two circular stones which turn on a fixed centre. The lower one is stationary, the upper revolves upon it, crushing the grain between the rough surfaces. Two women at one mill are very near to each other, and grasp the handle of the millstone together. The closest ties and occupations, of two friends walking together, two of a family preparing the daily meal, shall be broken suddenly and for ever.

42. *Watch therefore.* These words are the *moral*, or practical inference of the whole discourse. The Christian who would be saved, in view of all these facts which must come to pass, must *watch*, that is, must act the part of the sentinel in a night-guard; or the steward, who gets all things ready for his lord's coming; or the bride who desires not to be made ashamed at the coming of the bridegroom. This duty is further held up in the parables that follow.

43. *If the good man knew, &c.* The thief comes without warning, in the dead hours of night, silently, fearful, dangerous. Thus Christ will come in

44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant,[a] whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

47 Blessed[b] is that servant whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.

47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

a Acts 20. 28.

b Rev. 16. 15.

an instant, to wake the soul to the tremendous truths of an eternal world. The Apostles often use this startling form of address. 1 Thess. v. 2; 2 Peter iii. 10; Rev. iii. 3; xvi. 15. Only they who take the same reasonable care for their souls, which a master of a family would take of his household goods, will be prepared for Him. ¶ *In what watch.* In which of the four quarters of the night. See note, ch. xiv. 25. ¶ *Broken up.* The houses of the Jews were often made of earthen materials, so that the thief entered them usually by digging through the walls. The Greek word is "dug through."

44. *Be ye also ready.* Prepared by a due observance of all Christian duties; as St. Paul says, "have done all things," that is, all things which the Gospel covenant requires. Eph. vi. 13. St. Luke adds the command to *pray* always, that they might be accounted worthy to escape all these things, and to stand before the Son of man; not to be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, lest the day should come on them unawares. Luke xxi. 34, 36. These injunctions are general. Death came to some of them before that event predicted. Yet death is not held out as the one thing to be provided for. But the great reason of warning is the *second advent*, because on that follows the *judgment*.

45–51. This is a parable. The disciples were to be Bishops of the Church, and have the cure of souls. They would be able to learn from this natural illustration, how careful, diligent and watchful they ought to be. How solemn is the address of the Bishop to all those who are to be admitted priests, part of which forms a proper comment on these words. "Have always printed on your remembrance, how great a treasure is committed to your charge. For they are the sheep of Christ, &c. And if it shall happen that the same Church, or any member thereof, do take hurt or hindrance by reason of your negligence, ye know the greatness of the fault, and the horrible punishment that will ensue." *See the office for the ordination of Priests.*

¶ *Over his household.* The Church. Ministers are put in special charge for souls. Men must, therefore, do the duties which this relation puts on them. It is easy to say that the clergy should be faithful; but in that fidelity the people are deeply concerned, and should promote it by a faithful obedience to all the duties which the Scriptures impose on them. 1 Thess. v. 12, 13; 1 Cor. iii. 5; iv. 1, 2; xii. 28. ¶ *Meat in due season.* The word *meat* is put for all kinds of food used by a family. Here it stands for the Gospel manna, which consists in the due administration of the word by prayer and teaching, the sacraments and the godly discipline of the Church. John xxi. 15–17; Acts xx. 28.

46. *Blessed is that servant.* That faithful and prudent one. Faithfulness is shown in careful jealousy for the goods and honor of the absent master: prudence in the proper and wise distribution of them.

47. *Shall make him ruler.* He will make him to reign with Christ, to whom all things are committed; will reward him with peculiar blessings, according as he has been faithful and useful. 2 Tim. iv. 8; Dan. xii. 3.

48–50. *But and if, &c.* Saith Origen,

49 And shall begin to smite *his* fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of,

51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: [a]there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

a Ch. 8. 12; & 25. 30. *b* Rev. 19. 7; & 21. 2, 9.

CHAPTER XXV.

PASSION WEEK—TUESDAY.

THEN shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the [b]bridegroom.

2 And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish.[c]

3 They that *were* foolish took

c Ch. 13. 47; & 22. 10.

"Every Bishop who ministers not as a faithful servant, but rules by might as a master, and often a harsh one, sins against God: also if he does not cherish the needy, but feasts with the drunken, and is continually slumbering, because his Lord cometh not till after a long time."

51. *Shall cut him asunder.* A common mode of punishment in the East. 1 Sam. xv. 33; 2 Sam. xii. 31; Dan. ii. 5; iii. 28; Heb. xi. 37. This punishment in the parable, the servant would not survive. If cut asunder he would die. But human illustrations must fail when applied to divine things. This will be only the beginning of sorrows, in the Divine punishments. ¶ *His portion with the hypocrites.* Those who pretended to love and honor their lord, and were unfaithful. That place is hell, signified by the words, *weeping and gnashing of teeth.* On every unfaithful minister, every careless and ungodly layman, this dreadful punishment will fall.

CHAPTER. XXV.

1. *Then shall the kingdom of heaven.* See note ch. iii. 2. The kingdom of heaven, concerning whose coming you have asked Me, shall be represented under the likeness to virgins waiting at night the coming of a bridegroom to receive his bride. Eph. v. 25–32. ¶ *Ten virgins.* The Fathers searched for some mystic meaning in this number, and seem to have settled down on the explanation that they represented the senses: five senses make up the wise Christian who was prepared, five the foolish who was unready. But the number ten, if it has any significance, seems to have been taken more from the fact that ten men were required as the least number that could form a synagogue, or as we may say, a parish church. The virgins are to be understood either of individual Christians, or Churches, which wait for Christ. It is common now to smile at the Fathers for their vain conceits. We may also well weep over the infidel and cold robbing of Scripture of half, often of all its depth, which is now too common. Virgins are symbols of the Church, here of churches, because they should be pure, holy, and not disturbed by worldly cares from "minding the things of the Lord." ¶ *Which took their lamps.* The Jewish marriages and the feasts which followed them were celebrated at night. The customs of the East Indians are similar. The newly-married couple go from the house of the bride in procession after night-fall, the company bearing torches or flambeaux, to light the way. Another party comes forth to meet them, with torches, and accompanies them to the house of the bridegroom, where a feast is prepared. *The lamps* used in the East at this time are links or torches, made by wrapping up a roll of linen and inserting it in a mould of copper or earthenware, fixed to a handle of wood. As it can retain but very little oil, the linen is, from time to time, supplied with fresh oil from a vessel of it, which is carried in the other hand. The lamps

their lamps, and took no oil with them:

4 But the wise took[c] oil in vessels with their lamps.

a 2 Pet. 1. 5–9.

spoken of in the text may have been of such a kind, and required the prudent users of them to carry "oil in their vessels with their lamps." ¶ *Bridegroom.* From the old Saxon *Bride-goom*, the bride-man, he who married the bride.

2–4 *Five were wise, five foolish.* The word wise here means simply *prudent.* They had been provident to make a proper preparation against delay. The lesson which is enforced by this prudence is of a far higher kind when applied to Christian foresight. It then becomes true wisdom—the wisdom which provides now, while "it is day," against the night when no man can work. As the virgins by taking *oil in their vessels*, did make ready all that was required in their case, for the one duty which they had before them, so must Christians and churches provide all things which will be necessary in their stations for the coming exigency. If we understand by the virgins *churches* (see Is. xxvii. 22; Jer. xiv. 17), then the oil in the lamps and vessels harmonizes with many allusions of Scripture, to signify the sum total of good and holy works, which will adorn the various virgin bands that will flock up to the throne of judgment, to welcome the coming of the Bridegroom. Rev. i. 12, 20; ii. 5. ¶ *Oil in their vessels.* This figurative language has a peculiar beauty as illustrating the *secret process* of grace in the souls of men. As the secret oil which is furnished to the lamp, is given that the final result may be the light to give light to all in the house (ch. v. 14–16), so the gifts of God, His graces, the privileges of the Church, all that we sum up in the one word, *religion*, must, in order to save us, result in *piety*, i. e., in the light of a pure and holy soul, which may be fitted to enter where only the "pure in heart" can go. Chs. v. 8, xiii. 43; Phil. ii. 15. ¶ *Vessels.* "The true Hindoo

5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.[b]

5 And at midnight there was a cry[c] made, Behold, the bridegroom

b 1 Thes. 5, 6. *c* 1 Thes. 4. 16.

way of lighting up, is by torches held by men, who feed the flame with oil from a sort of bottle, constructed for the purpose." There were some such vessels, with whose use the disciples were familiar.

5. *The bridegroom tarried.* The time of a wedding procession would have been pretty well known. The time of the second coming is uncertain. It seems to be delayed by those who are waiting for it. ¶ *All slumbered and slept.* No one expected him then, for *all* were sleeping. How carefully does Jesus insist on constant preparation, showing by these words that the time and season of the judgment cannot be known. This sleeping was not wrong, for the wise were ready. But as watchers they had thus manifested the one point which Jesus would teach, *that they knew not the hour.* Their lamps *were burning.* They were ready in all substantial things. Only the trimming of the moment was needed. This slumbering and sleeping may be likened to death in individuals, or to the lesser pardonable unreadiness, which will be found in particular churches at the Second Advent. St. Mark xiv. 38, 40. But the foolish were in no way ready. They slept while their hour of preparation was passing.

6. *At midnight.* St. Jerome says: "The Jews have a tradition that Christ will come at midnight, in like manner as in that visitation of Egypt, when the Pascal feast is celebrated, and the Destroyer comes and the Lord passes over our dwellings, and the door posts of each man's countenance are hallowed by the blood of the Lamb. Hence, I suppose, has continued among us that Apostolic tradition that on the vigil of Easter, the people should not be dismissed before midnight, in expectation of Christ's coming."

7. *Trimmed their lamps.* All do it,

cometh; go ye out to meet him.

7 Then all those virgins arose, and [c]trimmed their lamps.

8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil: for our lamps are[‖] gone out.

9 But the wise answered, saying, *Not so;* lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready, went in with him to the marriage: and the door [b]was shut.

11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying,[c] Lord, Lord, open to us.

12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.[d]

13 [e]Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the

a Lu. 12. 35. ‖ Or, *going out.* *b* Lu. 13. 25; Gen. 7. 16; Rom. 8, 12.

c Ch. 7. 21, 22, 23. *d* Ps. 5. 5; Is. 65. 13. *e* Ch. 24. 42, 44; 1 Pet. 5. 8.

by supplying fresh oil, and removing the incrustations of the wicks. How touchingly is human infirmity, even of the best men, here alluded to. If no one would willingly leave life without "one longing, lingering look behind," who would willingly face, in an instant, without a moment's little preparation, the future scenes and destinies of the eternal world? Some little trimming the brightest light will need. The cry of the litany is founded deep in our hearts: "From *lightning and tempest*, from plague, pestilence and famine, from battle and murder and from *sudden death*, Good Lord, deliver us."

10. *With him to the marriage.* The Greek word is plural, as we say *the nuptials.* An eyewitness to a similar ceremony in India has made this note: "After waiting two or three hours, at length, near midnight, it was announced as in the very words of Scripture, "Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him." All the persons employed now lighted their lamps, and ran with them in their hands to fill up their stations in the procession. *Some of them had lost their lights and were unprepared, but it was then too late to seek them;* and the cavalcade moved forward." The moral is exquisitely worded in these lines of Milton.

Thy care is fixed and zealously attends
To fill thy odorous lamp with deeds of light,
And hope that reaps not shame. Therefore be sure,
Thou, when the Bridegroom with His feastful friends,
Passes to bliss at the mid hour of night,
Hast gained thy entrance, virgin wise and pure.

¶ *The door was shut.* There was no more admission. Saith an ancient writer: "No one's penitence, no one's prayer, no one's groaning shall any more be admitted. The door is shut which received Aaron after his idolatry, which admitted David after his adultery, after his homicide, which did not repel Peter." Luke xvi. 26; Gen. vii. 16.

12. *I know you not.* This is an emphatic manner of sealing the condemnation of the foolish virgins. They had not cared enough for the feast to make the customary preparation; and now the bridegroom expresses his ignorance of them. They must go to their own places. They have lost the happiness of his feast. But in the use of the same words by Christ of wicked men, what tremendous meanings will the words have. Now men will not know Christ. Then He will *not know* them. And to be unknown by Him, is to be cast back on the judgment of Him, who "out of Christ is a consuming fire."

13. *Watch therefore.* This is the moral of this parable, as of all these last words of Christ. All Christians are like the Virgins waiting His return in a long night of uncertainty. Of the hour of that event they can know nothing,

hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

14 ¶ For *the kingdom of heaven is* as a man travelling into a far country, *who* called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

15 And unto one he gave five

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therefore they must be ready for it at all times. This parable should warn us not to put off repentance to a death-bed. Then we in a manner receive the summons to attend the Bridegroom, for then our last opportunity of obtaining the "oil in the vessel," has come, or perhaps has passed. The majority of men in our country are putting off the duties of religion. Sudden repentance, rapid conversions, and all the usual exciting means of revivals have so corrupted sound doctrine among us, that few seem to think that piety is *the result of the whole life*—the final preparation of all the powers of the soul by long and earnest prayer, diligence and good works. Death finds the greater part of men unready, and a hasty repentance, a half-formed resolve, a few tears and ejaculations are offered; and unwise friends assure them all is well. But it is not well. God will not receive such fragments of a life, nor value the honor paid Him, by those who would not honor Him, while they dared to do otherwise. Christians must exalt piety to a wider reach, and more constant labor; must produce on the age a new impression, by their earnest, continual attention to this command. And, feeling the uncertainty of the future, and the strictness of God's judgment, they must be living always in His most holy fear. Says St. Augustine, "We know the day and the hour, neither of the future time when the Bridegroom will come, nor of our own falling asleep each of us: if then we be prepared for this latter, we shall also be prepared when that voice shall sound, which shall rouse us all."

14–30. *The parable of the talents.*

14. *For the kingdom, &c.* The future history of the Church on earth is farther sketched in the following similitude. There will be in its history something to correspond to the manner in which a certain lord treated his servants. By a man travelling into a far country Our Lord represents Himself. He was about to depart to heaven, and be absent from the Apostles. He would distribute to them the gifts and offices of His Church, that they should keep His blessings employed among men. He gave them different trusts called *talents*. The time in which the owner is absent is the period now passing. The return of the owner, is the still continued answer to the question which had been asked by the disciples *concerning His Second Advent*. Judgment then begins at the house of God, in examining every Christian, as to the fidelity he has shown in making the best use of his trust. Says Mr. Trench, "The *virgins* are represented *waiting* for their Lord; here the servants are *working* for Him: there the inward spiritual rest of the Christian is described—here his external activity. There, by the end of the foolish virgins, we are warned against declensions and decays in the inward spiritual life: here against sluggishness and sloth in our outward vocation and work." ¶ *His servants.* Not house servants, but subjects, who, though servants to him, were owners of property, and able to carry on certain trades. The talents represent the Christian offices and gifts of grace. Eph. iv. 7, 11; iii. 7. They *do not* represent, except by inference, what we call *natural talents*. For those are given by nature, not by the grace of the Christian covenant. ¶ *His goods.* Though he was to be absent, he was not willing that all the advantages of his presence should be taken from his people. He desires that his estate be managed in his absence for their benefit and his own. So Our Lord leaves *His goods*, the works and graces of the Spirit, to go on during His absence. He commits them to His servants to distribute to all who have need, for the common good.

15. *Five talents.* See note, ch.

‖talents, to another two, and to another one[a]: to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

16 Then he that had received the five talents, went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents.

17 And likewise he that *had received* two, he also gained other two.

18 But he that had received one, went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

19 After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

20 And so he that had received five talents, came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained besides them five talents more.

21 His lord said unto him,

‖ *A talent* is £187. 10s. Ch. 18. 24.

a Rom. 12. 6; 1 Cor. 12. 7, 11, 29; Eph. 4. 8–12.

xviii. 24. A talent of silver was equal in value to about fifteen hundred dollars. The five talents denote the highest gifts and offices of the Church. This office was the Apostleship, now continued in all respects, except in those gifts of miracles and inspiration, which were useful at first, but are now unnecessary. The parable has a good and sound application also to the great influences for good which men have, by their natural gifts, since our Saviour was not at this time settling the government of the Church, but predicting the condition of it. ¶ *To his several ability.* This *ability* is what we now mean by talents, i. e. natural parts, or skill in using this property to advantage. The same natural abilities cannot be meant in the word talents here. The talent is the something over and above natural gifts, which is intrusted from without. Influence in the Church, and skill in "winning souls," may approximate to the sense of a talent, because they are properly results of long prayer and a holy conversation, wrought in one by self-control in the fear of God, and frequent unctions from the Holy One. Such a skill may be shown by any Christian. This parable is not to be confounded with that related in the house of Zaccheus, though somewhat similar to it. Luke xix. 12.

16, 17. These two servants are representatives of all who are faithful and diligent in their vocation, and improve that which is intrusted to them. They gain as much more, and yet possess it not, aptly showing that the work of the Christian Church in seeking the salvation of men is done not for her own glory, but for love of her absent Lord.

18. *Digged in the earth, &c.* Again we hear the solemn warning to watch and labor faithfully. This man did not waste nor steal his lord's money; he simply *neglected* it. So they who are once trusted by the Lord Jesus, and neglect their duty, must be punished. It was as if Jesus had said; "I go away leaving you in charge, to do the work I have been doing in the Church. If you do not labor and strive diligently to represent Me to My people, to preach the Gospel committed to you, I will punish you on My return for this neglect, although you may be in all other things innocent." "If it shall happen," says the Bishop in Ordination, "that the same Church, or any member of the same do take any hurt or hindrance, *by your negligence*, ye know the greatness of the fault, and the horrible punishment that will ensue." The Christian whose only claim to be good is that he *does no harm*, is here shown his future punishment. To serve Jesus is to do something, is to work for Him. Salvation is a sacred trust. Many saints of feeble minds will shine as the stars in heaven, while many, who like Judas have had the highest privileges here, will be lost. Piety consists *not in having, but in using grace.*

19. *After a long time.* This phrase

Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things,[a] I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the [b]joy of thy lord.

22 He also that had received two talents came, and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents besides them.

23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

24 Then he which had received the one talent came, and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:

25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth:

a Ch. 24. 47.

b 1 Pet. 1. 8; Heb. 12. 2.

indicates the uncertainty of the time of our Lord's coming. It was after a long time, when they had ceased to think of His coming, as they did at first, and had settled down into their usual habits. See Ro. xiv. 12; 2 Cor. v. 10; Acts xvii. 31.

21. *Ruler of many things.* In St. Luke xix. 17, it is, "have thou authority over ten cities." The words have great beauty, as giving us a conception of the harmony preserved in the rewards of heaven. Saints will have crowns of righteousness (2 Tim. iv. 8; 2 Thess. ii. 19; Phil. iv. 1), everlasting blessedness resulting from the memories, and as the rewards of fidelity here. Rev. ii. 10; iii. 11. ¶ *Joy of thy lord.* Satraps, tirshathas, and other officers of provinces in the Eastern monarchies often reside at the courts of the kings. It was a great honor, and means of advancement. Applied to saints, welcomed into the presence of the supreme Head of the Church, it has a spiritual depth and beauty that exalts it infinitely above the oriental custom. *The joy of thy Lord* is the joy in His presence—the full satisfaction of every wish and thought,—and the union in the soul of all that pious hearts can wish. Says Archbishop Leighton: "It is but little we can receive here, some drops of joy that *enter into us*, but there *we shall enter into joy*, as vessels put into a sea of happiness."

24. *The one talent.* He lingered to the last. He had despised the small trust committed to him, and now comes to answer for his neglect. ¶ *I knew thee, &c.* The excuse is vain. It signifies that the excuses of indolent Christians will fail them at last. All that class of excuses which go on the ground of a pretended *humility*, as "I am of no importance," "I can do no good, and must try and get on, by minding my own business." Laymen are not to be parsons, they must not be too religious," &c., &c., are only harpings on the key of this man's excuse. The Lord looks for fidelity in little as in much. In a great army a single sentinel may be of very little note, but if he sleeps on his post the whole army may be destroyed; and a single Christian must feel that the smallest post does yet demand and give room for the greatest diligence, fidelity and love. ¶ *A hard man.* A severe master exacting rigidly all that was his own. ¶ *Hast not strawed.* Or, *hast not scattered.* The word refers to the customs of the threshing-floor. The grain and chaff, after the oxen had trodden them into a confused mass, were winnowed by a wooden shovel called a fan. The servant says that his master was one who expected the grain, where he had not taken the trouble of the harvesting and the threshing-floor. "The churl accounted his master churlish, thought him even such an one as himself; he did not believe in his lord's forgiving love, and in his gracious acceptance of the work with all its faults, which was done

lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine.

26 His lord answered and said unto him, *Thou* wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:

27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents.

29 [a]For unto every one that

a Ch. 13. 12; Mark 4. 25; John 15. 2.

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for him out of a true heart, and with a sincere desire to please him."

25. *I was afraid, &c.* Three things are worthy of note. 1st. His self-flattering excuse. He was over honest and careful, and would not lose the talent. 2d. His selfishness. He was for a fairer bargain and would do no labor except on conditions; whereas the true spirit of the Christian says, with Aquinas, "God requires of me, nothing except that good which He has planted and cherished in me by His grace." 3d. His false, insulting reflection on the character of his master, as one less generous and merciful than himself. ¶ *And hid thy talent in the earth.* The design of the parable is not to teach us that only those who have the *one* talent will be lost, but to teach us to *watch.* So the man with one talent is chosen as an opposite instance of one who refuses to watch and work. He perishes by sloth.

26. *Wicked and slothful.* Wicked, as the insult and churlishnesss of his excuse showed; and slothful, and stupid to his master's interest, as his actions manifested. The latter is a key-note of the parable. This was a man who *did not watch.* ¶ *Thou knewest.* "I take your own excuse and by it justly condemn you. If I was all this, and you cared for me, why not put my talent with those who deal in money, and suffer them to use it and repay me a lawful interest for it. Money is valuable *only when used.* Otherwise it is nothing but dust. You have in fact stolen from me all that it might have gained in my absence, and if you did not see fit to use it, generous man that you are, why not let another do so?" The point of similarity of the talent and grace is, that both are ours while *used:* while hid and buried, they are not ours. They who are in stations of trust, must not be idle.

27. *The exchangers.* Those who exchanged the foreign coins, which were brought them, for others required by the wants of the people in commercial or religious transactions. For this they demanded a small sum called per centage or interest. It was a business of great importance and perfectly justifiable. For the per centage was paid them, as a fair price for their labor in collecting the coins for the convenience of the purchaser. In dishonest hands this business was liable to great abuse. Brokers, bankers and exchangers of money, are so far from following a dishonest calling, that they are beyond all question a public benefit, and, by preventing the necessity of transporting coins about the person, have put down the evils of highway robbery and murders, with their consequences. The most pious man may exact the legal interest of his money, knowing that, as human society is now constituted, he is conferring important advantages, beyond those which pass under his eye. Only mercy as well as the interest table should be his rule in these matters. ¶ *Usury.* That which the money gains. See Luke xix. 23. The literal force of the word here is, the child of the money, i. e. its natural product, that which would be fairly, honestly given for its use. The word *usury* now is taken only in a bad sense, of illegal and exorbitant interest. It admits in early English of a good sense. Usury was strictly regulated by the Jewish

hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath.

30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into [a]outer darkness:

a Ch. 8. 12; & 24. 51. *b* Zech. 14. 5; Ch. 16. 27; & 19. 28; Acts 1. 11.

there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

31 ¶ When the [b]Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

political laws. Ex. xxii. 25; Lev. xxv. 36; Deut. xxiii. 19, 20.

29. *For unto every one that hath shall be given, &c.* The maxims of foreign nations must often be amplified to be intelligible to us. Here the meaning is: "For unto every one that hath (and as the parable shows, to have is to *use while having*) to such in return for their labor and fidelity *the gifts increase;* more shall be given: but from such as *have not* (and money has only a nominal value, and when not in use is only dust), and use not, shall be taken away, when things are subjected to the trial of the last day, even that which they seemed to have." Says St. Chrysostom, "As the corn, if it be let lie for ever in the barns, is consumed, being devoured of the worms; but if it is brought forth and cast into the field, is multiplied and renewed again: so also the spiritual word, if it be evermore shut up within the soul, being consumed and eaten into by envy, sloth, and decay, is quickly extinguished: but if, as on a fertile field, it is scattered on the souls of the brethren, the treasure is multiplied to them that receive it, and to him that possessed it: and as a fountain from which water is continually drawn forth, is thereby rather purified, and bubbles up the more, but being stanched fails altogether; so the spiritual gift and word of doctrine, if it be continually drawn forth, and if he who will has liberty to share it, rises up the more; but if restrained by envy and a grudging spirit, it diminishes, and at last perishes altogether."

30. *And cast, &c.* See note, ch. viii. 12. The spiritual meaning is, cast him into that land of darkness and punishment, whither the sinners of the human race will be driven. After this

we see our blessed Lord no more *as a teacher.* He now becomes a Sufferer. He has thus far shown the way of life, He now prepares it. And with this solemn farewell He goes quietly on to the betrayal and crucifixion. His last word to us, as to them who heard it spoken, is *watch.* The echo reverberates against His throne of judgment, and the caverns of everlasting punishment.

31–46. *The future judgment revealed in answer to the question of the Apostles,* (ch. xxiv. 3), *and as a comment on His whole discourse. This is the Antitype, of which the Fall of Jerusalem was the Type.*

31. *When the Son of man shall come, &c.* Our Lord gives us a glimpse of what shall be. It is all true, but not all the truth. Enough is given to fill us with the greatest awe. The Judge of all is the *Son of man,* is one of our race, to feel for, to pity and forgive the faithful Christian. The mystery of heaven and earth is bridged, and we can feel that *Jesus will pardon us,* though we cannot understand the mysteries of the Divine act of forgiveness. This Son of man is also the Son of God. "The Judge of all the earth" is Jehovah, the Messiah. Gen. xviii. 25; Acts x. 42, 43; 2 Tim. iv. 1. The Creed teaches us to utter faith in "one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, who shall come again with glory, to judge both the quick and dead." ¶ *In His glory.* In all the majesty of His nature as God and man. He laid aside the former when He took the form of man. "When Thou tookest upon Thee to deliver man, *Thou didst humble Thyself* to be born of a virgin." Phil. ii. 6, 7. He is Creator, the One who gave the law, in the awful pomp of Sinai. He will come again to maintain it. with all the glorious majesty which

32 And before him shall be gathered[a] all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a [b]shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats:

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father,[c] inherit the kingdom[d] prepared for you

a Rom. 14. 10; 2 Cor. 5. 10; Rev. 20. 12.
b Ezek. 34. 17, 20; Ch. 13. 49.
c Rom. 8. 17; 1 Pet. 1. 4; Rev. 21. 7.
d 1 Cor. 2. 9; Heb. 11. 16.

belongs to Him as King, Creator, Judge, Redeemer, and the equal of the Father. 2 Sam. xxii. 8–16; Ps. xcvii. 2–6; Dan. vii. 13, 14; Rev. i. 7. ¶ *The throne of His glory.* A Hebraism for *His glorious throne.* The scenery of the judgment will be of such a kind as to fill the minds of men with an awful sense of the Divine power. A great white throne shall be set in the worlds of space, and the scenes of Sinai will be reproduced in the midst of rending, burning worlds. See Rev. xx. 11–15; 2 Pet. iii. 10–12.

32. *And before Him.* At the sound of the last trump, the dead in Christ shall rise first. 1 Thess. iv. 16. They who are alive of His followers shall be changed instantly to spiritual and immortal bodies. 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. They will gather around the throne to welcome their Lord in the air, "clothed in fine linen, which is the righteousness of the saints." Rev. xix. 8. The wicked will then arise. John v. 28, 29. The fallen members of the Church shall throng around the left hand, some even bold enough to hope for pardon. Matt. vii. 21. ¶ *All nations.* All men who have ever lived on the earth. ¶ *And He shall separate, &c.* By His omniscience He will at a glance discern the characters of all men, with a certainty of a shepherd separating his flock. The angels will be the agents to carry out this division. Ch. xiii. 41, 42.

33. *The sheep, the goats.* In the language of the East, sheep were emblems of good men, because of their gentle and innocent ways. The goats of bad men, from their wildness and repulsive habits. Ps. c. 2; Zech. x. 3. ¶ *The right hand—the left.* Maimonides tells us that it was the custom of the Sanhedrim always to place the guilty person on the left hand of the judges; the innocent on the right. The right hand was considered the place of honor. Ps. xlv. 9.

34. *The King.* The Lord Jesus. Saith St. Jerome: "He who was within two days to celebrate the Passover, to be delivered to the cross, and mocked by men, fitly now holds out the glory of His triumph, that He may overbalance the offences that were to follow, by the promise of rewards. And it is to be noted that He who shall be seen in majesty is *the Son of man.*" ¶ *Blessed of my Father.* Heaven is a free gift, bestowed by the Father on those who have fulfilled the covenant. They are said to "*inherit the kingdom,*" because after that God had seen fit to bind Himself by the covenant, they acquire a claim to it through holy obedience. They are first made the sons of God by grace; and continuing faithful as sons, they are heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ. Ro. viii. 17. ¶ *Prepared for you.* The Bible, with great unity of purpose throughout, declares that God will save the saints who have obeyed Him in faith. They are promised Paradise. Salvation was figured in the ark; promised in the "seed" Isaac. The promise was renewed in the chosen nation; again in the Catholic Church. The doctrine of the Church, as derived from all Scripture, is that all men who, *by a right faith and true holiness in her midst, do fulfil the Scriptural conditions, are truly saved, being united in the covenant through her sacraments, by the power of the Holy Ghost, to the Lord Jesus Christ.* In this sentence of judgment, Jesus designs to represent His triumph and royal power. The reward is therefore called *a kingdom.* All men who have heard the Gospel, have once been able

from the foundation of the world:

35 For I was an[a] hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger,[b] and ye took me in:

a Is. 58. 7; Jas. 1. 27. *b* Heb. 13. 2; 3 John 5.

36 [c]Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in [d]prison, and ye came unto me.

37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when

c Jas. 2. 15, 16. *d* 2 Tim. 1. 16.

to be saved in it. He had *died for all*—offered salvation to all without respect of persons. They, therefore, who are rejected by Him at last, are only those who have first rejected Him, and refused the conditions of salvation. This covenant plan of redemption began in Paradise, in the promise made to Adam. Therefore, the kingdom is said to have *been prepared from the foundation of the world.* It had been prepared for just such saints. It was no new plan; no secret decree; no arbitrary election, but the one constant covenant condition of mercy—that those freely choosing to serve God by faith and love, should be saved in Christ. Mark xvi. 15, 16.

35. *For I was an hungered, &c.* 1. These acts of mercy are cited by our Saviour in this prediction as signs of a holy life, such as will make men fit to receive the blessedness of heaven. These have *not been single acts, but the habits of the saints,* and indicate that they were obedient to Christ in all things. They imply a life of charity, or as St. Paul says, "the faith which worketh by love." Gal. v. 6. No mere privileges or ordinances of Jew or Gentile, circumcision or the contrary, no faith without works, shall come in to settle the award, but only the faith *which has worked.* Jas. ii. 14. The spirit of the life, the fruit of it, the works done to Christians, not the professions, will avail then. Rev. xx. 12; 1 Tim. vi. 17–19. 2. The acts of mercy *are done in a true faith,* for they are done *to Christ;* in obedience to His law from faith and love to Him, and by the help of His Holy Spirit. Both *faith and works* are duly observed in this sentence. No man can do these works continuously, as to Christ, without believing in and obeying Him. Who can do them his life long, and not have a right faith, a good hope, and a pure charity? Says Bp. Porteus: "Charity makes only one of that large assemblage of virtues which are required to constitute the Christian character; and even while we endeavor to fulfil all righteousness, still it is not on that righteousness, but on the merits of our Redeemer, that we must rely for our acceptance with God. We must, therefore, collect the terms of our salvation not from any one passage, but from the whole tenor of the sacred writings taken together, and we shall find that nothing less than a *sincere and lively faith in Christ,* producing in us, as far as the infirmity of our nature will permit, *universal holiness of life,* can ever make our final calling and election sure." ¶ *A stranger.* A foreigner, one needing hospitality. The customs of the East render hospitality an imperative duty. A traveller in Palestine finds no inns. He waits in the public place of the towns until the sheik or some kind person offers him a lodging. See Judges xix. 15–21. ¶ *Naked.* In great destitution. Stripped of raiment. Luke x. 30. You despised not the poor, but showed compassion to their wants. The wants of a Christian excited all your sympathy, because of your love for Me. Jas. ii. 15, 16.

37–39. *Then shall the rightous say, &c.* Rabanius well remarks: "They say not this because they distrust the Lord's words, but they are in amaze at so great exaltation, at the greatness of their own glory; or because the good which they have done will seem to them to be so small according to that text of the Apostle (Rom. viii. 18), *For the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us.*"

saw we thee an hungered, and fed *thee?* or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink?

38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee?*

39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, [a]Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me.

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, [b]Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting[c] fire, prepared[d] for the devil and his angels:

42 For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me do drink:

43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you,

a Prov. 19. 17; Ch. 10. 42; Heb. 6. 10. *b* Prov. 1. 24–31; Lu. 13. 27. *c* Ch. 13. 42; Rev. 20. 14. *d* 2 Pet. 2. 4; Jude 6.

40. *One of the least of these My brethren.* To *Me* you have not shown these acts of kindness, but to the members of My Church, to that mystical body which was left to carry on the work of redemption, you have shown it. The unity of our Lord and His Church is one of the most solemn mysteries of the Scripture, next only to the truths which result from the doctrine of the Trinity. John xvii. 21. The Son of God, the Son of man, has established the relationship of the new birth, in which His followers become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and are called His brethren. St. Paul calls the relation of Christ and the Church, a mystery. Eph. v. 32. It is a union not merely of *feelings*, but one effected by a spiritual change. Titus iii. 4–7. It joins Christians to Christ by a participation and union, which *faith* may apprehend, but which words fail to express. John xv. 4, 5; 1 Cor. x. 17. This mystical body of Christ is always in the world, to do His work among men, and to allow the exercise of the Christian virtues. Eph. i. 22, 23; iv. 15, 16; Col. i. 18–28. These facts exalt the natural pitifulness of the heart into works of grace. Mercy becomes charity, and the highest proof of a gracious love of the unseen Lord and Saviour.

41. *Depart ye cursed, &c.* The curse is only the announcement and sealing of the woes which are the due returns of their sins. Fearful sentence! There is no middle ground between it and the reward of a holy life. ¶ *Everlasting fire.* As the wicked will rise in the body, they will be susceptible of bodily torments. They suffer now horrors of mind called "chains of darkness," in the intermediate state, while they are bodiless spirits. Hereafter they shall suffer an increase of punishment, suited to this risen body. Fire now gives the severest possible pain. Add to it the idea of *eternity*, and human language cannot go beyond it to express anguish. It will be endured in the body, and hence applied to body as well as soul. For, being originally meant for the devil and his angels, who are mere spirits, it is a mysterious, non-consuming, eternal fire, of which we can have but faint conception. See Is. xxxiii. 14. The language is in keeping with the accounts of the Valley of Hinnom, from which the word hell has its force. See note, ch. v. 22. Eternal punishment is one of the subjects of which the mind can form

[a]Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the [b]least of these, ye did *it* not to me.

a Prov. 14. 31; & 17. 5. *b* Zech. 2. 8; Acts 9. 5.

46 [c]And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

c Dan. 12. 2; John 5. 29; Rom. 2. 7, &c.

but feeble conceptions. The Christian diligently seeks to escape from so terrible a doom, knowing that the Judge of all the earth will do right; knowing that the shadow of the cross is a depth of darkness which must equal the light which shines from the Victim who expired on it; knowing that however little he may be able to explain the essence or nature of that "lake of fire," true wisdom bids him so live, that he may see it only from the walls of the holy city, where the saints will reign for ever. ¶ *Prepared for the devil, &c.* It was not prepared for men. They suffer it contrary to the will of their Creator, because they have made themselves like to the evil spirits. Jude 6, 7. The mercy of God appears even in this sentence. Sinners will, with consternation, see that it was only by wronging all the claims and calls of conscience; only by denying all the plans for mercy which God had laid for them, that they forced Him to punish them eternally.

45. *As ye did it not, &c.* We judge of the sentence upon the wicked by the whole tenor of the Holy Scriptures. See then a few passages. Rom. ii. 9; Col. iii. 5, 6; 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. The want of Christian virtues, are, in this connection, 1st. Signs that sinners have done no Christian works, and have had no virtues of faith and love. Some of them *professed* to have them, and lulled their consciences to sleep, with intentions of future good: but they had never brought their intentions to pass. 2d. This exaltation of works of charity, done by faith and in love to Christ, presents to us here the strongest motive to value that pure and undefiled religion which we can carry before God and the Father. Jas. i. 27. Faith cannot save us until it has progressed into works of love. ¶ *Least of these.* The saints who needed help upon the earth.

46. *And these, &c.* Alas, the parting! what woe to one side. The lost will part from husbands, wives, brothers, children, and behold them in triumphal procession, chanting the song of Moses and the Lamb—while they are marshalled by fiends into the prisons of the lake of fire. ¶ *Everlasting punishment. Life eternal.* The words everlasting and eternal are the same word in the Greek. One state is co-equal with the other, and both are endless. God has interwoven the two, so that the man who will attempt to deny the flames of hell, must deny the joys of heaven. Our translators seem to have chosen a variety of the words, as if the dignity of the subject was thereby better suited. The pains of hell are repeatedly declared ceaseless. "Everlasting burnings." Is. xxxiii. 14. "Everlasting shame and contempt." Dan. xii. 2. "Everlasting fire." Matt. xviii. 8. "Eternal judgment." Heb. vi. 2. "Eternal damnation." Mark iii. 29. "The blackness of darkness for ever." Jude 13. See Rev. xiv. 10, 11. We are assured then, beyond a question, that the state and condition of all men will be eternal. Reason, so far as she can sound the endless sea of wrath, must pronounce it just. There is then no change. The wicked cannot and will not repent. They will hate goodness as now, only in increased degrees. The fires of hell cannot wash out sins, or make the heart tender toward God. Let the Christian watch unto the coming of his Lord, and pray fervently in those solemn words which will one day be said by others over his ashes: "Yet O Lord God, most holy, O Lord most mighty, O holy and most merciful Saviour, deliver us not into the *bitter pains of eternal death.* Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts: shut not Thy merciful ears to our prayers: but spare us, Lord most holy. O God, most mighty, O holy and merciful Saviour, Thou most worthy Judge eternal, suffer us not at our last hour, for any pains of death to fall from

CHAPTER XXVI.

Passion Week—Tuesday.

AND [a]it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these

[a] Mark 14. 1, 2.

sayings, he said unto his disciples,

2 Ye know that after two days is *the feast of* the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

Thee." "We humbly beseech Thee, O Father, to raise us from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness; that when we shall depart this life we may rest in Christ; and that at the general resurrection in the last day, we may be found acceptable in Thy sight; and receive that blessing which Thy well-beloved Son shall then pronounce to all who love and fear Thee, saying, Come ye blessed children of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: Grant this, we beseech Thee, O merciful Father, through Jesus Christ our Mediator and Redeemer. *Amen.*"

CHAPTER XXVI.

1–5. See Mark xiv. 1, 2. The references in these last chapters to the other Gospels are cited according to the Harmony of Dr. Jarvis, Historiographer of the Church. He remarks: "These discourses were ended just as the sun was setting, and therefore our Lord reminded His disciples that it was then just two days or forty-eight hours to the Passover, when He would be betrayed to be crucified. At the same time the chief priests and scribes were in consultation at the hall of Caiaphas."

2. *After two days is the feast of the passover.* This was the great festival of the Jews. See Ex. xii. It was celebrated on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan, the first month of the sacred year. The Passover, properly speaking, lasted one day; but the seven days of unleavened bread which followed were sometimes included. The time of it was fixed by the changes of the moon attending the vernal equinox. It is easy to calculate the exact day of any particular year on which it occurred. On this year of our Lord's crucifixion, T. E. 34. it occurred on the 26th of March, at the very time of the year in which the Annunciation had been made to the Virgin Mary. This year presented a fact in regard to the changes of the moon, which is believed to explain a difficulty of this chapter. "The mean (visible) full moon was on Thursday afternoon, and the true full moon was on Friday morning." It seems, therefore, that our blessed Lord celebrated the Passover, by a custom which was permitted to the people, on the day before that on which the Scribes and Pharisees kept it. See John xviii. 28. He was able to eat the Passover with His disciples, and yet was Himself offered up as the true paschal Lamb, at the exact hour when the celestial bodies announced the true time for it. The reader will find the prescribed rites of the original feast in Ex. xii. Some pious customs had been added to give sacredness to it. On the 10th of the month Nisan, the same day when our Saviour entered the city (see note, ch. xxi. 1), the master of a family, or one acting for many others, chose a lamb or kid for the feast. On the 14th, he was obliged to carry it to the temple to be slain and the blood sprinkled by the priest before the altar of burnt-offerings. This was done by Peter and John, who also gave in to the priests the number of names for whom the lamb was killed. The lamb was then roasted whole, no bone broken or pulled apart; two spits being run through it in form of a cross. Bitter herbs were eaten with it, to signify the heavy sufferings of Egypt from which the Israelites were delivered. At first, the people ate it in haste, all prepared for travel, but in the land of rest, they assumed the usual position of reclining. First a cup of wine was set before all, and the meal was eaten, with a pious recital of the events of their deliverance from Egyptian bondage. The 113th and 114th Psalms were repeated, and short prayers made. They

3 Then [a]assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas,

4 And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill *him*.

a Ps. 2. 2; Acts 4. 25.

5 But they said, Not on the feast-*day*, lest there be an uproar among the people.

TUESDAY NIGHT.

6 ¶ [b]Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,

b Mark 14. 3–9.

then drank the wine which had been standing before them. Other wine was set on, and the whole concluded by repeating or chanting the Hallel, that is, the 115th to the 118th Psalms of the Psalter. The Saviour observed all the ritual of the Jews. ¶ *The Son of man is betrayed.* The present tense is used, for the act of betrayal, in a measure, had begun. The evil soul of the traitor was already meditating his great crime. He had predicted that He would be crucified at this very Passover. ¶ *To be crucified.* Punished by the cross. The apparent impossibility of such an event, which implied that Jesus would first give Himself to death, and then that the Jews would betray Him to the Romans, prevented the Apostles from giving credit to His words. See note, ch. xxvii. 35.

3. *Then assembled, &c.* The Sanhedrim alone had the power to try offenders against religion. The raising of Lazarus in Bethany (John xi. 47, 48), and the rebukes which Jesus had given them in presence of the people (ch. xxi. 45) caused this session. ¶ *The high priest.* The office had been begun in the priesthood of Aaron. Ex. xxviii. The high priest was judge of all the cases of offence against religion, and always exercised great power in the political history of the people. The office had gone on by succession with great regularity until the outrages of the monster Antiochus Epiphanes, B. C. 160. After his time it was held by the noble family of the Maccabean princes, until Herod the Great. He changed the incumbent of the office at his pleasure. After his death Cyrenius appointed Annanus or Annas, high priest. Valerius Gratus, succeeding, deposed Annas, and appointed Ishmael, and after a little, Eleazar, son of Annas, and after a year more Simon, and again Joseph Caiaphas, the son-in-law of Annas. Thus four high priests were made in the same number of years. There could be but one high priest at a time exercising office, but those who once held the name, retained it. ¶ *The palace of Caiaphas.* The large hall or court in the centre of a dwelling. See the plan of an Eastern house. Verse 57.

5. *Not on the feast-day.* Not during the feast on Friday. Great multitudes crowded to the city, and they had already seen the popularity of Jesus with them. They would delay seizing Jesus until the crowd had diminished, and they could depend on the people of the city, who were accustomed to obey them. But God overruled their plans. They are hurried on to accomplish the death of Christ on the very hour of their Pascal service.

6–13. *On Tuesday after night fall.* The Jewish Wednesday had begun at sunset. See also Mark xiv. 3–9; Luke xxi. 37, 38.

6. *In Bethany, &c.* See note, ch. xxi. 1. ¶ *Simon the leper.* Simon had been a leper and been cured. This event is not to be confounded with the one recorded by St. John, xii. 1–9. That took place *six days* before the Passover, in the house of Lazarus, and in the company of Mary and Martha. St. John says that the ointment was poured upon the feet of Jesus. Judas alone made objection to it, and perhaps in a private manner, and was rebuked. In this case all the disciples speak against her waste of the ointment. A similar

7 There came unto him a woman having an alabaster-box of very precious ointment, and poured *it* on his head as he sat *at meat.*

8 But when his disciples saw *it*, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose *is* this waste?

9 For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.

10 When Jesus understood *it*, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me.

11 For[a] ye have the poor al-

a Deut. 15. 11.

event happened in the house of Simon a Pharisee (Luke vii. 37–50), done by another Mary who was a *sinner*. St. Ambrose says, "It is possible that it was the same woman at different times, or two different stages of desert; first while yet a sinner, and afterwards more advanced."

7. *Having an alabaster box.* "She brake the box" (Mark xiv. 3), that all might be poured upon His head as a votive offering of a grateful soul. Alabaster is a kind of white marble, marked with veins of different colors, semi-transparent, and very brittle. It is easily cut and admits of a high polish. It was in great request by the wealthy and luxurious of the ancients for such purposes as the one here specified. It was thought to have peculiar virtue for preserving ointment from corruption. ¶ *Of very precious ointment.* "Ointment of spikenard, very precious." Mark xiv. 3. It is in the original called *nard*, and is said to have been extracted from the root or bark of the spikenard (Andropagon nardus). It was of exquisite fragrance and softness. There is an utter disregard of cost in this act, which manifests great faith. It was usual with the Jews to anoint the head and other parts of the body with perfumed oils, to render the skin pliable and soft (Matt. vi. 17, 18), but there was no record of such acts as this, previous to death, except in the case of our Saviour.

8. *They had indignation.* One grain of true spiritual faith, and their anger would have been stilled. Had they *believed*, as they did not, that He was to die in so short a time, and loved Him truly, the *waste* would not have pained them. For of what value can all the wealth of the world be in such an hour? What was the waste of her box compared with the good fame of the deed—the spiritual blessing to her? Worldliness and avarice blind us to the real value and truth of things. We value dust and despise a crown. ¶ *Sold for much.* St. Mark says for three hundred pence —about forty-five dollars. Money which is given to the Saviour is never wasted. Let it be done in faith guided by true love. All the means which are expended by the Church, in works of spiritual profit, in rendering honor to God, or promoting the piety and salvation of men, will be kept in remembrance hereafter. It is a bad sign for piety when money is spent freely on all objects of personal comfort, pride, or even luxury, and parsimoniously on all things regarding religion. The true spirit of love will respect the duties to be rendered to God's honor, as supreme, those to self as secondary. 2 Sam. xxiv. 24; 1 Chron. xvii. 1; 2 Cor. viii. 1–5.

10. *Why trouble ye the woman?* Why blame her and make her ashamed of the venturing love which has marked this act. ¶ *A good work.* A work of love, done from a pure desire to do honor to her Saviour; perhaps to her, a Saviour from grievous woes. It was also a good work, as it anointed Him to the burial.

11. *For ye have, &c.* The duty of providing for the poor, is one of great importance. But it was one which could be always performed. They were never without them. Deut. xv. 11; Ps. xli. 1. We hear the same pretext of charity often used now-a-days against rendering honor to God by *costly churches.* And when costly churches are

ways with you; but me [a]ye have not always.

12 For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did *it* for my burial.

13 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, *there* shall also this, that this woman[b] hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

a John 13. 33; 16. 5. b Lu. 21. 37, 38.

WEDNESDAY.

14 ¶ [c]Then one of the twelve,

c Mark 14. 10, 11; Lu. 22. 1.

built only to increase the pride and ostentation of a congregation, it is a good objection. For charity is better than splendid vanity. But it is certain that the poor have never suffered by the increase of that tender love for Christ, which seeks to honor Him with temples costly enough to show self-denial in His service. The spirit cherished in such works, will never leave the poor to suffer. All who cavil at such deeds of piety, ought to give *very* largely to the poor, before they speak, remembering that the inventor of the objection was Iscariot. ¶ *Me ye have not always.* In the body, which needs any such expenditure. He promised to be with them, and with us always, but it is in the Spirit and by His grace. In the body, which needed care and support, He would soon leave them.

12. *She did it for My burial.* It seems natural to suppose, that the woman had some indistinct meaning of her action, and did it with some such intention—for this appears to have given it significancy. We may suppose her to have heard of dangers to Jesus, to have been timid by nature, and, perhaps impressed by the words which Jesus Himself had used. In ancient times it was usual to embalm bodies with costly spices and perfumes. See John xix. 39, 40. She had, as it were, anticipated this usage by her act.

13. *A memorial of her.* St. Chrysostom has the following eloquent passage concerning this prediction: "Behold the accomplishment of this saying, To whatsoever part of the world you go, you will find this woman famous; and this has been wrought by the power of Him who spake this word. How many victories of kings and captains have passed into oblivion; how many who built cities, and enslaved many nations, are now known neither by report nor by name; but the deed of this woman pouring fourth ointment in the house of a leper, in the presence of twelve men, this resounds throughout the world, and though so much time has elapsed, the memory of that which was done is not effaced. But why promised He no spiritual gift to this woman, but everlasting remembrance only? Because this He did promise made her confident of receiving the other also; whereas she wrought a good work, it is clear that she shall receive an adequate reward."

14.—16. See also Mark xiv. 10, 11; Luke xxii. 1–5. *Wednesday, after sunset.* We should read, as coming in before this act of Judas, John xiii. 1–30. The day was probably spent some where upon the mount of Olives.

14. *Then one of the twelve.* Judas was angry at this rebuke, and his hate, or avarice, or fears, urged him to immediate action. St. Luke says that "Satan entered into him." ¶ *Judas Iscariot.* See note, ch. x. 4. It is remarkable that St. Matthew abstains from every epithet against a man guilty of such a crime. It is a striking proof of the powerful effect of the lessons of charity which he had received, and the influence of inspiration in curbing the infirmities of human temper. ¶ *Unto the chief priests.* He went to those who were conspiring against Jesus. St. Luke adds, the "captains." These were the leaders of a guard of priests and Levites, whose duty was to protect the temple and the sacred rites from being interrupted by riotous persons. They were at the command of the chief

called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests,

15 And said *unto them*, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for[a] thirty pieces of silver.

a Zech. 11. 12; Ch. 27. 3.

16 And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

THURSDAY.

17 ¶ [b]Now the first *day* of the *feast* of unleavened bread, the

b Ex. 12. 6, 18.

priest, for such a work as this. Judas left the company of the disciples, on the evening of the first day of unleavened bread, when it was usual for pious Jews, to put away all leaven from out of their houses. In his heart was "the leaven of malice and wickedness." 1 Cor. v. 8. Among the many suppositions as to the motive, it seems probable, that he had become convinced that his avarice would never be gratified in the service of Christ, as he had once thought, and that he aimed by this deed, to obtain a good opinion from the rulers, while he escaped from the consequences of having been so long a follower of one so obnoxious to them. The money seems too small in amount to have been a sufficient temptation.

15. *Covenanted with him.* They made an agreement with him that he should inform them of the place where Jesus spent His evenings, that they might take Him secretly. Otherwise they would have searched for Him in vain, in the crowded state of the city. The word covenanted has the force of putting forth the money. They were prompt to pay him and secure his services. ¶ *Thirty pieces of silver.* Or thirty shekels, about *fifteen dollars* of our money. This was the price of a slave. Ex. xxi. 32. It was like their hypocrisy and hatred to fix this price, to show their contempt for Jesus, as if it were wrong for them to pay more. The price fulfilled a prophecy of Zecharias: "So they weighed for My price thirty pieces of silver." Zech. xi. 12. This happened on Wednesday evening. The event has marked the day in the annals of the Church as a fast day, to commemorate in humility the wickedness, which has caused the death of Jesus; not only in Judas' own heart, but in the whole race. The weekly fasts of the primitive Christians were carefully observed on Wednesdays and Fridays, because on one the Lord was betrayed, on the other crucified. Our Church calendar appoints all the Fridays of the year as fasts, except when Christmas occurs on one of them.

16. *Sought opportunity.* St. Luke explains what was the opportunity they wished, by adding, "in the absence of the multitude." We have in this caution the testimony of the enemies of Jesus, that His death was altogether voluntary, since, on only human calculations, He had need only to *begin* the attack on them, or compel them to begin it in public, in order to gain the aid of the multitude. But by first arraigning Him in private, and then proclaiming Him as condemned for impiety, they gained the fickle mob; which is always led by the momentary passion to follow the stronger party. ¶ *Betray Him.* To deliver up one who trusted in him: to fail in a duty of friendship or sacred trust. It is a crime deservedly condemned by all men. The very men who took advantage of the treachery of Judas, despised him, and spoke the most cutting words to him, as one having in his hands "the price of blood." After Judas had left the disciples, there occurred the conversation which is recorded in John xiii. 31, to xv.

17–19. *Thursday.* See Mark xiv; 12–16; Luke xxii. 7–13. This day is sometimes called Mandy or Maundy-Thursday, from the Latin words *dies Mandati*, the day of the command. The practice of washing one another's feet was long kept up, after which alms were given to the poor. The custom has been

disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?

18 And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples.

abolished. The humility which, we trust, prompted it, ought to be perpetual. On this day the persons who had been excluded from the Church since Ash-Wednesday were restored. All the doors of the churches were thrown open, to signify the same. It is especially important to Christians, as the day of the institution of the Holy Communion.

17. *The first day of unleavened bread.* The days of unleavened bread were eight. Christians still are accustomed to celebrate Easter till its octave, so that, should the Communion be celebrated, the same preface of praise "for the glorious resurrection" must be used. See *Prayer Book.* This day was the 14th of the month Nisan, which happened on that year, March 25th. ¶ *Of unleavened bread.* The Jews were not required to remove all leaven, which with them was simply sour dough, used in baking bread, from their houses, until evening, when the lamb was killed. But to avoid all danger of offence, they began to purge their houses, from top to bottom, by the light of day, with a care that partook something of superstition. The actions of our Lord and His ten disciples on this day (Peter and John being absent in the city) are not recorded. We may believe that the day was spent in duties of prayer and religious counsel, among the shady retreats of Olivet, in order to prepare Himself and them for the fast-coming events. 1 Cor. v. 7.

18. *Go into the city to such a man.* Into Jerusalem. The paschal lamb could be eaten nowhere else. Peter and John had asked this question, probably early in the morning, and were sent on this errand. It required two to convey the lamb to the temple and to witness to the priests there the number who were to eat of it. They are sent to find a particular man, "bearing a pitcher," who was probably a disciple, as appears from the message sent him. Luke xxii. 11. This caution may have been used on account of the presence of Judas. He could not from these circumstances convey the knowledge of His movements to the priests. ¶ *The Master saith.* The *teacher*, opposed to the word disciple. It supposes that the man addressed would at once know the claim made on him. He would show them the guest chamber, "a large upper room, furnished and prepared" for this very purpose. It was usual for the citizens of Jerusalem during this great feast to throw open their houses to strangers. The day was spent by Peter and John in executing this commission. After finding the man, and seeing the rooms, they had to buy the lamb and carry it to the temple, and have it killed there, and the blood sprinkled in the name of a paschal lamb or a passover for thirteen persons. For Judas was necessarily included, because if he had offered to withdraw, it must have been done before Peter and John left, and would have excited suspicion. They were then to carry the lamb home, where it was to be eaten, get the bread and wine ready, and the bitter herbs, and any other things requisite for the meal. According to Josephus, the lamb could not have been slain until after the evening sacrifice at three P. M., so that they would be occupied until evening. Josephus informs us that no paschal could be killed for any company less than ten. ¶ *My time is at hand.* The time of His betrayal to the Jews. The disciples did not comprehend Him. It appears from a comparison of the Evangelists, that our Lord eat of the Passover on Thursday evening, while the priests delayed their supper till the following day. John xviii. 28. There must have been a latitude of time allowed by the Jews. For the lamb was to be slain at the temple, with certain words and rites. It was

19 And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover.

20 Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.

21 And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.

22 And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?

23 And he answered and said,

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impossible for any one to celebrate the Passover, unless by permission of the priests. The explanations of the learned Dr. Jarvis are consistent and satisfactory. "The lamb was slain before the setting of the sun on Thursday, and might be eaten at any time after dark, and before the next morning. See Ex. xii. 8–10. He might have postponed it if He pleased till a later hour: but much was to be done that night, and He chose the earliest hour which the law allowed." The Jews fixed the time of the new moon *by its appearance*. But between the apparent and real age of the moon, as the latter would be marked by astronomical calculations, there was the difference of a day. "A diversity of practice was *allowed* on account of the variation between the apparent and real time of the new and full moon." See *Dr. Jarvis's Introduction*, part ii. ch. viii. pp. 456–459. The three Evangelists are positive in saying that Thursday was a proper day for the Passover, while St. John as clearly shows that the Pharisees kept theirs the following day. John xix. 14–31. Our Saviour kept the former; and was Himself offered as the true Passover Lamb on the latter, the true day, when the constellations had registered the exact hour of the appointed time.

20, 21. *Thursday evening after sunset began the 15th Nisan or Friday.* See Mark xiv. 17, 18; Luke xxii. 14–18.

20. *When the even was come.* The lamb was killed between "the evenings," that is between three P. M. and sunset. Ex. xii. 6. It could be eaten at any hour of that night. Ex. xii. 8. ¶ *He sat down.* They reclined at the table according to the usual custom. The original command was to eat the paschal lamb standing, with their shoes on their feet, and their loins girded. But after they had reached the land of Canaan, the reasons for this order had ceased, and the custom was changed. They then eat it in a position of rest, for they were to wait where they were for the coming of Him who was to fulfil the type of the lamb.

21. *As they did eat.* St. John says, that Jesus "was deeply troubled in spirit and testified." His human nature began to be overwhelmed with the increasing weight of the awful suffering which it was to endure. The first part of His sorrow, was the sin of Judas, whom He now convicts openly of his crime. The disciples could not understand His suffering, and did not, to the last, imagine that He would be indeed delivered up by one of their number. ¶ *With the twelve.* Judas could not be absent, as it was impossible for him after the lamb was killed at the temple to transfer his name to another company. He was obliged, therefore, to violate every obligation, human and divine, to achieve his guilty purpose. Even the wild Arab of the desert will not injure the one who has just taken part of his meal. Judas went from this sacred meal to the enemies of Christ. Ps. xli. 9; John xiii. 18.

22. *Exceeding sorrowful.* Amazed and grieved at the thought that such a crime was possible by any one of their number. Yet aware of the perfect knowledge of Jesus, in all the secrets of the heart, they each begin to fear for himself, lest His divine insight may have detected in him the possibility of such a deed. It may seem singular that the disciples did not at once *know* that Judas was the criminal, and all turn to condemn him. But we must bear in mind, that he was a hypocrite,

[a]He that dippeth *his* hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.

a Ps. 41. 9; & 55. 12, &c.

24 The Son of man goeth,[b] as it is written of him: but wo unto that man by whom the Son of

b Is. 53; Dan. 9. 26.

and had veiled his real character under an appearance of great sanctity. He it was who was most forward to "defend the cause of the widow and the fatherless;" from which circumstance Bp. Andrews has termed him with delicate, but severe satire, "that *pater pauperum*," or father of the poor. We now know Judas as a criminal; the disciples perhaps thought him a most pious man. Let us ponder this difference of views, that we may learn to detect the like signs of hypocrisy, if unhappily they should be found in us or about us.

23. *He that dippeth his hand with Me in the dish.* At a preceding supper Jesus had signified to John, who the traitor was, by giving to him a sop or bit of bread after He had dipped it in the dish. But as John reclined next to Jesus at the table, it is likely that this had been done privately. John xiii. 23–30. But now seeing the disciples grieved and agitated by this remark of coming treachery, Jesus makes a sign by which the traitor shall be known to all, by fulfilling to the letter the prediction of the Psalm (xli. 9) he "which did eat My bread hath lifted up his heel against Me." In the East to this day, it is the custom to place food before the guests in large dishes, into which all dip their hands, to take their portions. At this supper, the Jews provided a particular dish, made of bitter herbs, palm branches, and raisins, seasoned with vinegar; the whole mixture serving to remind them of the hard bondage of their ancestors in the brick-kilns of Egypt. Into this it is probable that Judas dipped his hand with the Saviour.

24. *The Son of man goeth, &c.* He goes on to die freely and according to the will of God. The foreknowledge of God never forces the free will of man, to do wrong. ¶ *As it is written of Him.* In Ps. xxii. Is. liii. and other places. It was done by the "determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." Acts ii. 23. The whole system of sacrifices had foreshadowed the death of Christ. The prophets had predicted it as surely to come to pass at that time, and we Christians cannot but believe that it was the will of God and the will of Christ from the very beginning, that it should be. Nothing can be more certain than the truth, which is declared so often in Scripture, that "known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world" (Acts xv. 18), unless it may be the certain folly of men who presume to speculate upon this *incomprehensible doctrine*, to deny the free will of man in doing right and wrong, and in choosing good and evil in the matters of personal salvation. It is a "godly consideration," that there is "an everlasting purpose of God, where by (before the foundations of the world were laid) He hath constantly decreed by His counsel, secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom He hath chosen *in Christ*, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honor."—*Art. XVII.* But though the counsel be secret, inasmuch as we cannot grasp it, the whole Church system is founded on what *we do know of His promises*, which offer free salvation to all, and which threaten destruction to those only who refuse them. It was the will of God that Christ should die for sin. It was His will that Judas should betray Him to death, only after Judas had utterly and totally rejected all good, and altogether chosen evil. He sinned primarily, and even to the end, *of his own free will.* ¶ *But wo unto that man, &c.* Therefore Judas was in all respects guilty of awful sin and punishable with eternal destruction. Does the reader ask "Why, when it is said that God had foreordained this event?" It is perhaps better to answer at once, that no one can sound the depths or untie the perplexed questions of this mysterious subject. And in this spirit the

man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.

25 Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.

26 ¶ And[a] as they were eating,

[a] 1 Cor. ii. 23, &c.

Seventeenth Article warns us, that "for *curious* and carnal persons, lacking the spirit of Christ, to have continually before their eyes the sentence of God's predestination, is a *most dangerous downfall*, whereby the devil doth thrust them either into desperation, or into wretchlessness of most unclean living, no less perilous than desperation." We may say, then, that for Judas to sin, it was necessary that he *could* sin, for only *free agents can sin*. A stone falls because it *must* fall. The *must* prevents the idea of sin, though it should kill any one in falling. Judas could have served his Lord, loved and obeyed Him, but *would not*. And though it constantly grew harder for him to do right, it was yet, by labor and prayer and penitence, still possible, even to the last. But he *chose* wrong, and, step by step, continued to choose it, till he was guilty of a crime which he would have at first rejected. He had a free will. But sinning had quenched the Spirit and narrowed his power of will. He was reprobate, and while he sought his own ends, he fulfilled the purpose of God, and made himself the heir of woe unutterable. Our Church does firmly hold two things as true. 1st. The perfect and entire Omniscience of God, which embraces all His works and rules them to His will. 2d. The free offer, in good faith, of salvation to all men (see Catechism): and the Scriptures teach the same. Both discourage the "curious and carnal" questions that go beyond these, to narrow and deny in any part either doctrine. The Christian may find the "godly consideration of predestination and our election in Christ" (into a state of salvation, by which we may be saved on the Gospel conditions, and not by secret assurances founded on presumptuous convictions of an hereditary peerage of grace and unrevealed Divine right) to be "full of sweet, pleasant and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh and their earthly members, and drawing up their minds to high and heavenly things, as well because it doth greatly establish and confirm their faith of eternal salvation, to be enjoyed through Christ, as because it doth fervently kindle their love toward God." Such persons will always receive the promises of God, as they be generally set forth in Scripture, and make the conditions of the Gospel covenant their ground of hope.

25. *Master, is it I?* Bold and wily to the last. The innocent disciples say, *Lord*, the guilty one, *Teacher*, is it I? He now by the change denied the claim which was signified in the appellation Lord. Jesus answers the insulting question so gently, "Thou hast said," the very mildest form of affirmation, that we must ponder, to feel the bold insult of the hardened wretch.

26–29. *The institution of the Lord's Supper.* Se also Mark xiv. 22–25, Luke xxii. 19, 20; John xv. 1–27; 1 Cor. xi. 23–25. Read in connection, John xv., xvi., and xvii.

26. *As they were eating.* At the close of the meal the final cup of wine, called the *cup of blessing*, was drank. See 1 Cor. x. 16. Jesus said to them, "With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffered" (Luke), meaning I have earnestly desired this parting feast. He would leave them with this most sacred memorial. Every Christian should desire to partake of this holy supper before his death, in imitation of the example of Christ. The Church encourages her members to participate in it in sickness. ¶ *Jesus took bread.* Bread and wine were before Him. Dr. Jarvis says of it: "He was then acting as the Great High Priest, devoting Himself as the Lamb

Jesus took bread, and ‖blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

‖ Many Greek copies have *gave thanks.*

All the language of the prayer (John xvii.) is sacerdotal and sacrificial. From the institution of the sacrament, the commencement of our Lord's Passion must be dated, for *thenceforth He was a passive sufferer.*" The Sacrament grew out of the Passover. "He very naturally directed His disciples that their ancient customs should, for the future, be applied to the greatest of Divine blessings, and become the memorial of 'Christ their Passover, sacrificed for them,' as indeed the bread broken aptly enough represented His body, and the wine poured forth expressly figured out His blood shed for our salvation."—*Archbishop Secker.* ¶ *And blessed it.* This word means more than giving of thanks. It signifies a prayer for all the blessing which may properly be desired for the object which is blessed. It is generally used in the New Testament of persons, and implies a Divine assurance of such blessings as the persons are capable of receiving. Matt. v. 44; Mark x. 16; Luke i. 42. Sometimes it is addressed to God, and becomes praise, since that alone we mortals can give Him. Luke i. 64. And rarely it is used of things. Jesus *blessed* the loaves and fishes, which thereby became capable of the miraculous increase. Matt. xiv. 19; Mark viii. 7; Luke ix. 16. The elements which were blessed, did then receive all the powers of which they were capable, and as no change of substance took place, no increase and no property of bestowing any physical advantages; it follows that we must look for the result of the blessing in the *spiritual* relations which the elements were to bear. The Christian world is unhappily divided as to these effects. The design of these notes will allow of no other words on this important subject than those of *our authorized standards.* The Priest in announcing the Holy Communion, exhorts the people to thank God, that He hath given His Son Jesus Christ "not only to die for us, but also to be our *spiritual food and sustenance in that Holy Sacrament,*" and adds that it is "*a divine and comfortable thing to them who receive it worthily.*" He calls it "*holy mysteries, as pledges of His love,* and for a *continual remembrance of His death, to our great and endless comfort.*" He solemnly prays in the name of all "that we may so eat the flesh of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and drink His blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His body, and our souls washed through His most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in Him and He in us." He calls the elements "holy gifts which we now offer," and the "memorial which Thy Son hath commanded us to make." He prays again, "Sanctify with Thy Word and Holy Spirit these Thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine," and attributes to the due and proper reception, the being "partakers of the most blessed body and blood" of Christ. It is "a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving." To faith in the blood (not the symbol of it) of Christ is given "remission of sins and all other benefits of His Passion." He prays that all partaking of the elements may "be filled with God's grace and heavenly benediction and made one body with Him, that He may dwell in them and they in Him." Eph. iv. 15, 16. It is termed "*consecrated* bread and wine." We are fed "with the *spiritual food* of the most precious Body and Blood" of Christ, assured "thereby of God's favor and goodness towards us, and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of Thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people, and are heirs through hope of Thy everlasting kingdom, *by the merits of the most precious death and passion of Thy dear Son.*" The Catechism teaches that the inward part or thing signified by the Lord's supper is, "The body and blood of Christ, which is *spiritually taken and received by the faithful* in the Lord's Supper," to

27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye[a] all of it;

a Mark 14. 23.

28 For this is my blood of the new[b] testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

b Jer. 31. 31–34.

"the strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the body and blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the bread and wine. *See Articles XXV. and XXVIII.* Our Church then considers the blessing of the elements to have been more than a giving of thanks. It sanctified them to sacred uses, so that our souls, by duly, worthily and in faith receiving them, may, *after a spiritual manner*, be strengthened and refreshed thereby. ¶ *This is My body.* This *represents* My body in the same manner as the lamb which we have eaten represented the Passover. Moses had said, "It *is* the Lord's Passover." Ex. xii. 11, 27; Lev. xxiii. 5. The same language had become common to the Hebrews. The body of Christ was then before them. As they received from the lamb all the civil and moral blessings of the Passover, so by the sacrament they were to receive the spiritual blessing of the new Covenant made in the death of Christ. 1 Cor. v. 7. The Romish Church fondly pretends that the sacramental bread is the actual bleeding flesh of Jesus. This is called *Transubstantiation.* "Transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of bread and wine), in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ; but it is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions. The body of Christ is given, taken and eaten only after a heavenly and spiritual manner, and the means whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten, in the Supper, is faith."—*Article XXVIII.* Jesus consecrates it to be the sacred symbol of His blood shed for the remission of sins. ¶ *Drink ye all of it.* That is, *let all of you* drink of it. The impiety of the Church of Rome is seen in denying this command, and saying, in effect, "Only the priests shall drink of it." "The cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the lay people; for both parts of the Lord's sacrament, by Christ's ordinance and commandment ought to be ministered to all Christian men alike."—*Art. XXX.*

28. *For this is my blood.* This represents my blood, and conveys the spiritual blessings of the new covenant made in it. St. Luke and St. Paul have explained the meaning of the words. "This cup *is the new Testament (or Covenant) in my blood.*" The Church repeats to each of her children the words of Christ, as suitable to that temper of mind with which they should receive the elements: "The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was *shed for thee*, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life: *drink this in remembrance* that Christ's blood was shed for thee, and be thankful." And so of the bread: "Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on Him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving." ¶ *Shed for many for the remission of sins.* In the blood of animals and men lies the secret mystery of their life. Gen. ix. 4; Lev. vii. 26, 27; Acts xv. 20. Our Lord here declares that *His life* was offered as the great means and way of salvation for men. "He suffered death upon the cross for our redemption." He made "there (by His one oblation of Himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world." The fact is repeatedly stated by the sacred writers (Heb. ix. 12, 14, 22; Col. i. 20; 1 Peter i. 2; 1 John i. 7), and by our Lord Himself: John vi. 54–56; iii. 14, 15. Through His blood, by faith in His blood, we have the forgiveness of sins. Beyond *the fact* the sacred writers do not venture. They say nothing of the *how* or the *wherefore*, but simply state *the fact.* And it becomes us to bow reverently before the adorable Saviour and rely on His promises, nor seek to draw the veil in

29 But I say unto you, I will not[a] drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

a Acts 10. 41.

30 And when they had sung an ‖hymn,[b] they went out into the mount of Olives.

31 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because

b John 18. 1. 2. ‖ Or, *psalm.*

which He has shrouded the mystery of redemption. Let us pray to Him for faith and humility; and while we feel His grace in our hearts sanctifying us, let us not dare to intrude into the Holy of Holies, where stands the Ark of the Covenant. "By Thine agony and bloody sweat; by Thy Cross and Passion; by Thy precious death and burial; by Thy glorious Resurrection and Ascension; and by the coming of the Holy Ghost, Good Lord, deliver us." See the Hymns for the Lord's Supper, Hymns 93–96.

29. *I will not drink henceforth, &c.* This is the last time that the Passover will be celebrated by you in its old signification. After My death and resurrection it will have an entirely new meaning, and show you the New Covenant, by which your souls, and those of all who believe on Me, shall be released from the bondage of sin. The Passover was a type of the death and redemption of Christ. The type was now to be lost in the actual fulfilment; the shadow to pass away before the substance. After His resurrection, their souls would be refreshed by the grace of His Spirit, as their bodies had been by the bread and wine. ¶ *The fruit of the vine. Wine.* It stands for the whole supper, a part for the whole. ¶ *Until that day.* Until after the resurrection and the descent of the Holy Spirit. We do not know that the Lord's Supper was again celebrated by Him in its new and full sense, after it was separated from Jewish symbols. ¶ *In My Father's kingdom.* In the kingdom of God, the Church, which is established here and fulfilled hereafter. These words, while relating directly to the Church here, do also pass onwards to take in the Marriage Supper of the Lamb in heaven, when all types and shadows and sacraments will vanish.

30. *And when they had sung an hymn.* At the Passover the Jews were accustomed to chant the Psalms cxii. to cxix. It is probable that the Lord's Supper was concluded with this portion of the Psalms. In deference to this example, Christians, after the elements of bread and wine are consecrated before them, sing an hymn. See Hymns 93 to 96. ¶ *The mount of Olives.* See note, ch. xxi. 1. The place to which he led the disciples was about a quarter of a mile from the city. We suppose it to have been eight o'clock in the evening when the Supper was concluded. Judas, at the same time, went to the high priests to obtain a band to apprehend Jesus.

31–35. See Mark xiv. 27–31; Luke xxii. 31–38.

31. *Then saith Jesus.* We are now treading on holy ground, and here, above all other parts of Scripture, may well pray in the words of the Litany, "That it may please Thee to give all Thy people increase of grace, to hear meekly Thy word, and to receive it with pure affection, and to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit: we beseech Thee to hear us, Good Lord." The conversation recorded in St. John's Gospel (xiii. 38), probably occurred on the night previous. But our Lord again warned the disciples, and Peter in particular, of the near approach of the time of trial. ¶ *Shall be offended.* Shall be ashamed to own Me in My apparent disgrace. To this the impetuous Peter replied. He probably thought that these gloomy expressions of his Master were occasioned by *doubts of their fidelity* and natural irresolution on the eve of a great crisis. He pledges himself to defend Him to the death. *He kept his promise* in the sense in which he made it. He drew his sword, and faced the band of armed men, and to his own imminent peril began the assault. Some harshly call him a *coward.* A coward would have fled.

of me this night: [a] for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.

32 But after I am risen again, I will go [b] before you into Galilee.

33 Peter answered and said unto him, Though all *men* shall be offended because of thee, *yet* will I never be offended.

34 Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night,

a Zech. 13. 7.

b Ch. 28. 7, 10, 16.

The cause of his shameful fall lay in the fact, that he had not the spiritual faith in his Lord, as the Victim slain for sin, which alone could explain and endure the *voluntary shame* of the succeeding scenes. He denied facts, because he could not fathom the reasons why Jesus should submit to insult. ¶ *For it is written.* Zechariah xiii. 7. Our Saviour refers them to ancient prophecy, to prevent them from despair at seeing Him fall before His enemies. ¶ *I will smite.* God is often said to do whatever He permits to be done. He suffers evil and compels it to work out His purposes of good. He does not compel any man to sin, but when they do evil, He orders that evil, to work out His own glory. Ps. lxxvi. 10. He permitted the death of Christ in order to save the world. ¶ *The Shepherd.* This word was used of the Messiah very early. Gen. xlix. 24. See Ps. xxiii. 1, &c.; Is. xl. 11. The word *sheep*, to signify His disciples, teaches us the affectionate rule which He exercises over us. ¶ *Shall be scattered.* As sheep would flee in the darkness of night at the invasion of wild beasts and the loss of their shepherd, so the timid disciples fled from their Master.

32. *But after I am risen.* Behold the tenderness of Christ. In His deepest affliction He still thinks of them. He desired to console them. But how weak is the heart to believe. They understood not, what rising again could mean. It was all a dream to them. ¶ *Into Galilee.* It had been the chief scene of His ministry among them, and there He would again appear to them afar from His enemies. See Mark xvi. 7; Matt. xxvii. 16. ¶ *Galilee.* See note, ch. ii. 22.

33. *Peter answering, &c.* This boldness of Peter, and his boasting of his fidelity, in saying that though all the other disciples should desert, he would be faithful, should be contrasted with his own words after a life of faith and trial had shown him the deceitfulness of the heart. 1 Peter v. 5–10. ¶ *Though all men.* Especially, all the other disciples. As he boasted over all, it seems just that his shame should be published in the presence of all. St. Luke adds that Jesus said unto him that Satan had desired to have him, that is, to have power over him, as he once did over Job, that he might sift him as wheat, but that Jesus had prayed for him, to prevent it. Also, that after he was *converted* (that is, had repented and recovered himself), he must strengthen his brethren. His fall taught him gracious wisdom, whereby he was afterwards able to warn and recover the weakest brethren of the Church, with singular and feeling eloquence.

34. *This night, &c.* It was hardly four hours after this brave speech, and brave it would have been, if Jesus had meant to resort to carnal weapons, that Peter denied his Lord. His natural courage hid from his mind spiritual truth, and prevented the belief that he *could fall.* Suddenly his visions of a brave human warfare, fail; he sees Christ yielding, shamed, disgraced, and he who had braved an armed band, fell before the question of a little maid. ¶ *Before the cock crow.* Mark and Luke add the word *twice.* St. Matthew omits it simply because the second was technically called *the* cock-crow. The habit of this fowl is to crow at three periods of the night, at midnight, half way between it and dawn, and from an hour before dawn till day. The crowing at three o'clock, is properly called

before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

35 Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.

36 ¶ [a]Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

37 And he took with him Peter, and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

38 Then saith he unto them,

a Mark 14 27; Lu. 22. 31.

the cock-crow. See Mark xiii. 33. St. John's words mean the same thing. "The cock shall not crow," that is, it shall not be the time known as *the cock-crow*, before thou hast denied; as St. Luke has it, denied *that thou knowest Me.* The particular form of the denial of Peter, was in refusing to be known as a Galilean, or one of the company of Christ. A denial in all points no less foolish than false. Even they who heard it, knew enough to despise him for it. ¶ *Likewise also said all.* None of them except St. John kept the promise. They were kept from the gross sin of St. Peter, only by lacking the courage and affection to follow Jesus afar off. St. John alone remained by Him to the last, and heard His last words. And St. John alone of them all is thought to have died a *natural death.* We see how necessary it is that all our strength should be from God. These men who had been for three years instructed by Jesus Himself, fell into temptation for lack of the Spirit of grace.

36–46. *The first part of the Passion. Gethsemane.* See Mark xiv. 32–42; Luke xxii. 40–46; John xviii. 1, 2.

36. *Gethsemane.* The word means *the place of oil-presses.* It was a field surrounded by a wall, containing several olive trees, and probably some buildings. There is still at the foot of the Mount of Olives a square enclosure, surrounded by an ordinary stone wall, to mark the spot. "Giving myself up to the impressions of the moment," says Dr. Robinson, "I sat down here for a time, alone, beneath one of the aged trees. All was silent and solitary around. High above towered the dead walls of the city, through which there penetrated no sound of human life." St. Luke says that our Lord was wont, i. e. accustomed to retire to this spot for prayer. Hence Judas knew that he would find Him in this enclosure at this hour. Behold the hardness of his treachery, who dared to choose the very hour given to prayer, to do his evil deed. ¶ *While I go and pray yonder.* At the distance of a stone's cast, says St. Luke. Jesus again warned them to pray, lest they should enter into temptation. This same warning had pointed all His last parables, recorded by St. Matthew; to *watch and pray.* If they had done so, if they had entered into the spirit of His command, and spent that hour with Him in prayer for grace, instead of leaning on their own strength, they might have cheered the dying agonies of Jesus by their sympathy, and escaped the shame of unbelief.

37. *And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee.* Peter, James and John. See ch. x. 2. These three had beheld His transfiguration on Mount Tabor (see ch. xvii. 1, &c.), and the miracle of raising the daughter of Jairus (Luke viii. 51). Having been selected to witness His glory and His power, they are now permitted to behold His suffering. But alas! their human infirmity prevents them. They let slip the hour, in which they might have beheld the wonderful humility of the Son of Man, and gained strength to have followed him into the scenes of trial. The Christian in times of sickness and affliction may still gain spiritual strength to endure his cross, by the devout contemplation of this scene in the solitudes of Gethsemane. Heb. xii. 3. ¶ *Sorrowful and very heavy.* These words are a climax, the last being the more emphat-

My soul is exceeding[a] sorrowful even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

39 And he went a little further, and fell on his face,[b] and prayed,

a Is. 53. 10. *b* Heb. 5. 7.

saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me:[c] nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou *wilt*.

40 And he cometh unto the

c John 5. 20; & 6. 38.

ic. He was sorrowful and overwhelmed by mental anguish. As man He now yields to the weight of sorrow, which God puts upon Him. Why was this? Why was God's own chosen One, the man without sin or guile, who had served the law and been perfect in righteousness, thus bowed down "even unto death," with unutterable anguish? Our answer, gained from the Scriptures, is, that He did not grieve for Himself, nor for fear of His own death. But He bore *our griefs*, He carried our sorrows, and the chastisement of our peace was upon Him. Is. liii. The sea of human sin and woe was then surging above His soul, and He a single mariner, was being buried alone beneath the waves of all that sorrow, which but for Him, the race of Adam would have suffered. Laying aside all pride of curious reason, let us rather pray: "Almighty and everlasting God, Who of Thy tender love toward mankind, hast sent Thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, to take upon Him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the cross, that all mankind should follow the example of His great humility; mercifully grant that we may both follow the example of His patience, and also be made partakers of His resurrection, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

38 *My soul is exceeding sorrowful.* His mind and spirit were filled with intense grief. It bore on Him inwardly and from the spiritual world, not so much from the fears of danger at things in this scene of suffering. The Greek Litany says with great force, "By *Thine unknown sufferings*, have mercy upon us." Our Litany discriminates the suffering of soul, which Christ endured, from His death: "By Thine *Agony* and bloody sweat, by Thy Cross and Passion, by Thy precious Death and Burial," &c. So the Communion Service: "Having in remembrance His blessed Passion and precious Death." And the *Article II.*: "Who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried to reconcile His Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for actual sins of men." Again the Apostles' Creed makes the distinction, "suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried." He suffered those sorrows in His soul, which together with His death made up the Sacrifice of Atonement. ¶ *Even unto death.* A mental horror. It was a bitter and inconceivable agony. ¶ *And watch with Me.* The word implies wakefulness, as sentinels wake and watch in the night against enemies, or as shepherds against wild beasts. Did our blessed Lord lean and yearn towards human sympathy in that dark hour, and none was given? Truly He trod the winepress alone. Is. lxiii. 3.

39. *A little further.* He sought retirement even from them. The shade of the olive trees would conceal Him for His prayer, from the clear moonlight, then shed from the full moon. This agony lasted for an hour, till between nine and ten at night. ¶ *Fell on His face.* He first kneeled (Luke) as was His habit, and then, weighed down with sorrow, fell prostrate. ¶ *If it be possible.* If there be a means of saving man in any other manner, let Me escape this death. Human nature shrank from the pains He suffered, but even in showing that He felt them, He subdued all unwillingness, and rested in the Divine appointment. This exclamation is explained by His anguish and sanctified by His obedience. The counsel of God was founded on unerring wisdom, that "*without shedding of blood there was no remission of sins.*" Love for man and zeal for His Father's honor had prompted Christ to undertake this

disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What! could ye not watch with me one hour?

41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation:[a] the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh[b] *is* weak.

42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying,

a Rev. 3. 10.

b Gal. 5. 17; Ch. 25. 5.

work, and now to conquer the struggles of His human nature, against the approach of the consummation of the work. ¶ *This cup.* His sorrow was likened to a cup filled with some horribly bitter and poisonous potion. See note, ch. xx. 22. ¶ *Not my will, &c.* Says an ancient writer: "This speech of the Head is the health of the whole body, this saying is instruction to the faithful, animates the confessor, crowns the martyr. For who could vanquish the hatred of the world, or the whirlwind of temptations, or the terror of the persecutors, if Christ did not, in all and for all, say to the Father *Thy will be done*, Let all the sons of the Church, then, utter this prayer, that when the pressure of some mighty temptation lies upon them, they may embrace endurance of the suffering, disregarding its terrors."

40. *And findeth them asleep.* St. Luke adds, "*for sorrow.*" We are informed by physicians that it is a common occurrence for persons in great grief, after a certain time of oppression of the faculties by a keen sense of their sorrow, to sleep. It is to be remarked that our Lord had often warned them of trouble, as coming speedily upon them, but did not tell them the very hour and circumstance of it. He bade them *watch.* So we are to watch. The very form and moment of the coming temptations are not for us to know. It would have been easy for the disciples to have watched for the band of Judas, if they had known of its coming; but in that case the whole force of the example would have been lost to us, who are called to expect trials, but are not permitted to know the future. Matt. xxiv. 43.

41. *Watch and pray. Watching* is a word taken from the custom of setting sentinels at night, around an army. Their duty is to be vigilant against the stratagems of the enemy. In commanding us to *watch*, our Lord shows us, as by a figure, our Christian condition. In bidding us *pray*, He points out to us whence our safety comes, that we may watch to some purpose. Our duty is to be careful and vigilant against unexpected surprises, to use forethought and wisdom, to prevent the sudden invasion of evil against our own souls and those of others. Keble has paraphrased the meaning of this precept in the case of the pastors of the Church, as follows:

"When foemen watch their tents by night,
And mists hang wide o'er moor and fell;
Spirit of Counsel and of Might,
Their pastoral warfare guide Thou well."

¶ *The spirit is willing, the flesh is weak.* How kind was this reproof, how gentle and self-forgetting this excuse, and how profound the warning of these words! The disciples depended on their native powers and understood not the warnings of the Saviour. After the day of Pentecost they acted more wisely. They watched and prayed, till prison doors were opened at midnight, and furious enemies were disappointed, by unseen ministers of grace. Sins of infirmity are rebuked in this passage, rather than allowed. If the flesh, i. e. the natural heart is ignorant, weak, and strongly inclines us to yield to sloth and inactivity, we must conquer it. What shall we say of those whose spirit even is not willing to do God's will, but only to indulge the flesh, and idle away the precious moments of grace?

42–44. Our Saviour spent about one hour in the solitude of the garden; and as He had actually no witnesses, but the celestial guards who came to

O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

43 And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.

44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.

47 And while he yet spake, lo,[a] Judas, one of the twelve,

[a] Acts 1. 16.

strengthen Him after His moments of agony, the few words which are used by Evangelists in describing His suffering, must be considered as received from Him afterwards. They show us only the outline of the Passion; that it was *inconceivable*, yet *voluntary*. His human spirit quailed beneath it, and He sought strength in earnest prayer. St. Luke says, that "His sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground." This was a degree of mental anguish of which we may speak in words, but can only form feeble conjectures. It does not become Christians to search too curiously into the depths of that sorrow. It is to us the same as the Holy of Holies was to the Jews, a sacred spot, shrouded by the veil of night, and holding in its unknown depths, the blessed work of the Atonement for sin; the true Ark of the Covenant. If it had been necessary for us to know exactly what were the steps and limits of the gracious work of the reconciliation of God to mankind, and how exactly God did put upon Christ our sorrows, and make Him bear the chastisement of our peace, we may rest assured, that all would have been told us. But the Apostles were content with informing us, in general terms, that on that blessed passion and precious death, our redemption depends, and in His sufferings was sealed the Covenant of the Gospel, by which alone we have hope of salvation. The calm moonlight shining through the olive trees of Gethsemane shows us only the prostrate Sufferer: the sun withdrew to shroud in darkness the agony of Calvary, to warn us that in both scenes, we may not rashly intrude. He who kneels to study each event in the spirit of love and fear, with full faith that there his own sins were crucified and washed out, is the best student. Divines have sought out many *theories* of the "inward and spiritual grace" of that great Sacrament; but they themselves can find no satisfaction in them. The veil which hangs over this subject is not to be lifted by mortal hands. We know that we are saved by Christ. God alone knoweth *why* He made Him a sacrifice of sweet savor, in reconciling the world to Himself.

45. *Sleep on now.* "It is no longer possible for you to be of any service to Me. The hour for watching and prayer is past. The enemy is at hand. I am to be delivered up into the hands of sinners, and you are now to fall into temptation and forsake Me." Many seem to have difficulty with these words, as if they interfered with the following words: "Arise, let us be going." But we can have no difficulty if we consider it only as a mode of announcing the fact that now it was too late to watch against that particular danger. The disciples would now desert Him. It would matter little, as far as their desertion of Him was concerned, whether they woke or slept. He says this over them as they sleep. But with the next words He rouses them to activity, as the distant lights of the coming party of Judas could be seen. ¶ *The hour is at hand.* This hour or crisis, so often predicted. John ii.

came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.

48 Now he that betrayed him, gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss,[a] that same is he; hold him fast.

49 And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Master; and kissed him.

50 And Jesus said unto him,

[a] 2 Sam. 20. 9.

4; xii. 23. An hour in familiar language is put for any short space of time. ¶ *Sinners.* Wicked men, such as Judas, Caiaphas, Pilate, Herod and others.

46. *Rise, let us be going.* He desired them to be awake now, that they might at least escape. They go on a few steps, as if to meet the coming crowd, to manifest that He voluntarily yields to their violence.

47–57. *The scene of the betrayal of Jesus,* recorded in the four Gospels. Mark xiv. 43–52; Luke xxii. 47–53; John xviii. 3–12.

47. *Judas, one of the twelve.* He knew the place, as St. John informs us, because Jesus was in the habit of going to it for prayer. He had separated from them after the supper and gone to the part of the city near the temple, where the temple-guard was kept. He was not far from this spot at any time. ¶ *A great multitude with swords, &c.* St. John says, that Judas had received a *band of men and officers* from the Chief Priests, and that they came with lanterns and torches. These were provided to prevent concealment in the secret places of the garden. The temple-guard, as Josephus relates, was set to preserve order in the temple during the time of the great feasts. It was at the command of the Chief Priest. Ch. xxvii. 65. Other citizens accompanied them, urged to it by zeal for their religion. They seized any weapons which came to hand. It was certainly a perilous adventure, had Jesus chosen to resist. ¶ *Staves.* The plural of staff; a stick or club. Jesus had strangely escaped from the power of an enraged multitude on more than one occasion, before this. Luke iv. 30.

48. *Whomsoever I shall kiss.* This was a common mode of salutation. Luke vii. 45. It implies intimacy and affection, and shows how base was the disposition of the traitor who dared, by such a style of address, to point out his familiar friend and Master to His enemies. It was done in this manner, in order to avoid exciting suspicion. They may have feared that Jesus would escape from them in some strange manner if He should be prematurely alarmed. To manifest to His disciples, as also to His enemies, that He yielded of His own free will, and not from fear of them, Jesus, as St. John informs us, first awed the multitude by a word, so that they went backward and fell on the ground in confusion. After this He stipulated for the safety of his disciples, before yielding Himself into their hands. John xviii. 12.

49. *Hail, Master.* Rejoice, be happy. The Hebrew word Rabbi, translated in this place *Master*, was a term of salutation from a disciple to his teacher. Judas put himself on this footing with wily art. It denied any higher confidence in Him, than one might have in any learned Scribe, and at the same time, it appeared to pay Jesus great respect. The character of Judas seems to have been one of the greatest art: a smooth-tongued, pious-seeming, crafty self-seeker, able to deceive the minds of all men. He was known only to Him, who knew all that was in man. ¶ *And he kissed Him.* Shall we wonder at the boldness, or be shocked at the shamelessness of the traitor. Either he was a man of singular confidence to dare this act, or was in a grievous strait from fear of the multitude, lest they should remember that he too had been till then a disciple.

[a]Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.

51 And behold,[b] one of them which were with Jesus, stretched out *his* hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest, and smote off his ear.

52 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into its place:[c] for all they that take the sword, shall perish with the sword.

53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve[d] legions of angels?

54 But how then shall the

a Ps. 41. 9; & 55. 13. *b* John 18. 10. *c* Gen. 9. 6 Rev. 13. 10; 2 Cor. 10. 4. *d* 2 Kings 6. 17; Dan. 7. 10; Ch. 4. 11.

50. *Friend.* Rather *Companion*, or as the English once used the word, *Fellow*, one who has fellowed or kept company with another. Origen says: "He says Friend, *upbraiding his hypocrisy*, for in Scripture we never find this term of address (ἑταιρε) used to any of the good, but as in Matt. xxii. 12; xx. 13." See note, ch. xx. 13. ¶ *Wherefore art thou come?* This was said, not from ignorance of his intention nor desiring any reply, but to strike his conscience with some sense of shame at his wicked, impudent hypocrisy. As a look moved Peter to repentance, this gentle word, so full of meaning to his conscience, may have awakened Judas to a late remorse.

51. *And behold, one of them which were, &c.* St. John says that it was Peter. The other Evangelists concealed the name, as they wrote while that Apostle was alive, and would have needlessly exposed him to danger from the Jews. When St. John wrote his Gospel, Peter was dead, and he gives the name. His reason for mentioning it may have been, also, to do Peter all the justice, humanly speaking, of which his case was capable. Peter fell because he had not Divine grace to see *how* and why, this One who was buffeted and spit upon by menials, could be in very deed the Son of God. Can we, then, call Peter a coward and such like terms of contempt? May we not better think of him as the bravest and most loyal of men, humanly speaking; and thus derive from his fall the lesson, that even such native energy and talents, without the gift of spiritual regeneration, are not sufficient to give an insight into the mysteries of grace, and to keep one from shame? Brave and energetic men rely on themselves, not on God. It was this consciousness of a *proud courage* in Peter, which began his fall and exposed him to the shame of denying his Master, like the veriest coward. ¶ *Drew his sword.* There happened to be two swords among them. Luke xxii. 38. It may be that at times the disciples carried some means of self-defence against robbers and wild beasts. A proper self-defence against violence, even to extremity, is by no means forbidden by the religion of Christ. ¶ *A servant of the high priest.* His name was Malchus. Jesus touched the ear and healed it. This rash act was partly the cause of Peter's second denial, as some relative of Malchus was among those who questioned him. John xviii. 26.

52. *All they that take, &c.* A proverbial expression to intimate to the impetuous disciple his great mistake. Jesus was not about to resist force by force, nor to take the sword to conquer earthly kingdoms, as Peter thought. He would now contend by other and spiritual weapons, whose use the very impetuosity of the disciple had prevented him from discovering. All those who use the sword, in the proverbial sense, may be said to perish by it, whether in wars or in tumults against the civil authority. Or we may take it as a prophetic speech against the Jews, who were now seizing Him by the sword, by which they would soon be fearfully scourged. This reproof given to St

scriptures be fulfilled,[a] that thus it must be?

55 In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me.

[a] Lu. 24. 26. 46.

Peter, does not condemn the proper use of the sword in self-defence, or in execution of the laws or in obedience to the magistrate, in war.

53. *Thinkest thou?* The Greek reads, *Or thinkest thou*, as if in continuation of the preceding verse, meaning, "Do you rely on human force, and not on Divine power? Do you think that I have not power, even now, to pray to God and be rescued?" It left the disciple to infer: "Then He who has such power and wisdom must be right, and it is my duty to follow and see the end, even though I do not comprehend the reasons which move Him to endure this shame." ¶ *Twelve legions.* A legion was a division of a Roman army, containing six thousand men. Twelve seems, as Theophylact observes, to be used, as applying to the number to be aided—Himself and the eleven disciples, as if God would send a legion to defend each. This He said, not as if He needed the help of angels, but to convince Peter. He who could summon the heavenly hosts to help Him, had no need of a few disciples. See instances of angels helping holy men. 2 Kings, vi. 17; Dan. vii. 19; Matt. iv. 11.

54. *But how then, &c.* His escape would have defeated the very design of His coming. God had determined beforehand His death. The rites and symbols of their ritual had foreshadowed it. The lives of their holy men, and great events of their nation, had typified it, and their prophets had foretold it. Says St. Jerome: "This speech shows a mind willing to suffer; vainly would the prophets have prophesied truly, unless the Lord asserts their truth by His suffering."

55. *In that same hour.* About the same time. ¶ *Are ye come out, &c.* This appeal to the multitude manifests the same thing: that they could do nothing against Him, unless they were permitted. Why do they come out against Him, and a little company of eleven men—an armed band against defenceless men, in the silence of night, as if to surprise them? Instead of avoiding them, Jesus had sat daily in the temple. They could not answer Him, for it was because their deed was evil, that they did it under cover of night.

56. *Scriptures of the prophets.* The writings of the prophets, which make up a large part of the Old Testament. ¶ *Might be fulfilled.* Again Jesus says, "*Thus it must be.*" Verse 54. This was the plan which Infinite Wisdom had put in operation for this end, and, now, having come to carry it out, He would not shrink from the bitterness which it imposed on Him. The same Lord who fulfilled the Scriptures in the incarnate person of Jesus Christ, Himself, as Jehovah, directed those Scriptures to be written. The "pattern in the mount," which Moses saw, by which to build the Jewish system, was the Christian Church. Heb. viii. 5; x. 1. Hence in the Divine mind, the Jewish and Christian covenant are parts of one perfect whole. Every part corresponds to the others. It is folly, therefore, to be troubled by such phrases as this, which declare that certain things are done, that the Scriptures containing this Divine plan might be fulfilled. Only a Divine Being could have made and carried out the plan of Redemption. ¶ *Forsook Him and fled.* If the Evangelists had been impostors, they would never have forged such a tale as this! We see their veracity, by a proof which Bishop Porteus has seen fit to call *demonstrative.* We are not informed what became of them for the next twenty-four hours. Two recovered courage to return and witness the scenes which followed. John xviii. 15. St. Mark adds, that a young man, aroused probably out of sleep, was seen for a moment, and efforts were

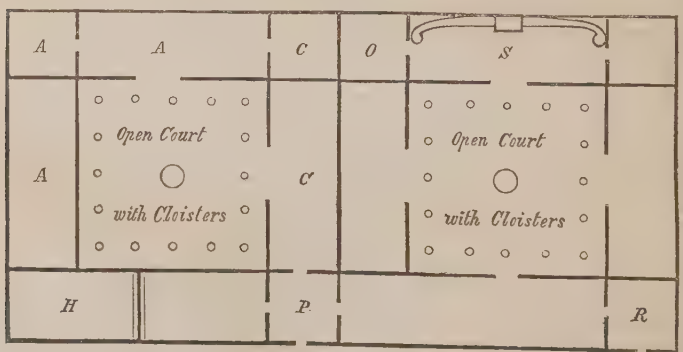
56 But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. [a]Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

a John 18. 12.

57 ¶ And they that had laid hold on Jesus, led *him* away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.

made to seize him, but that he escaped out of their hands.

57. *And they that had laid hold, &c.* They carried Jesus away first to the house of Annas or Ananus, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, followed by Peter and John. Luke xxii. 54–57; John xviii. 13–17. There occurred the first denial of Peter, as he stood in the lower hall warming himself. See Matt. xxvi. 69, 70; Mark xiv. 66–68; Luke xxii. 55–57; John xviii. 18. After this first denial, a cock was heard to crow *for midnight.* Meanwhile Annas inquired of Jesus concerning His doctrine; but as Annas was no longer high priest, Jesus refused to answer. John xviii. 22–24. Annas then sent Him bound to Caiaphas, the actual high priest. Verses 57, 58. Peter followed Him, and entered with the crowd. With this event closes this Thursday, according to Roman time. According to Jewish time, it had been Friday since sunset. To understand the events recorded above, the plan of a Jewish house, taken from the descriptions of the traveller, Dr. Shaw, by the learned Dr. Jarvis, is added. He supposes that our Lord was led by the great door through the vestibule (P) and the open court, into the spacious hall of Annas (A). Peter, remaining in the room (H), at the brasier of coals, in the lower part of the room which is marked by a dot, was recognized by a maid servant. On being sent back to Caiaphas. our Lord was led again to the hall (H), while Peter, fearing to remain with those about the brasier of coals, had retired to the vestibule (P). The plate will assist the reader. It is probable that the high priest's house was upon or near Mount Moriah, and perhaps was a portion of the temple. The area of the Temple contained more than a million and a half of square feet. No small part of this was taken up in buildings for the use of the Priesthood.



A Apartment of Annas. *C* Apartment of Caiaphas. *H* Hall of the High Priests *H H* Hall of the Sanhedrim. *P* Porch of the High Priest's Palace communicating with the apartments of Annas and Caiaphas through the open court. *R* Porch leading into the hall of the Sanhedrim and so through the open court to *S*, the Council Chamber of the Sanhedrim contiguous to the High Priest's apartment and communicating with it by a private door.

58 But Peter followed him afar off, unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants to see the end.

59 Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death;

¶ *To Caiaphas.* The high priest. St. John states that Jesus was first led to Annas, a man of great energy and influence, who was called high priest by courtesy. It formed, however, no part of the real trial which St. Matthew relates, since Jesus rejected his authority. ¶ *The scribes and elders.* The Sanhedrim. They were the supreme judges of all matters touching religion. The first question, on the arrest of Jesus was, "Had He broken the law in any particular worthy of death?" They assemble to put Him on trial. See note, ch. v. 22.

58. *Peter followed afar off.* The two events, *the trial of Jesus* and *the denials of Peter*, occur together. It was left to the choice of each writer, which to record first. St. Matthew first finishes with the trial, and then gives the denials all at once. St. Mark, who wrote under the direction of St. Peter, has given the words which passed, and St. John has followed the order of time. There is noticeable in the latter Evangelist, a marked delicacy in every mention of St. Peter. Both were men of high spirit, both chiefest in their labors and honors, and St. Peter was dead at the time when St. John wrote. Peter followed in amazement and fear. By following at all, he manifested his love; by following *afar off*, his fear. He compromised with his fears, and desired to appear only as one of the spectators But Satan made it impossible for him to remain neutral. As he hovered around the scene, the temptations were put to him, and he fell. Had he gone at once with St. John and remained at the side of Jesus, he would have been safe. The dubious ground of compromise with sin is the destruction of the Christian. ¶ *Unto the high priest's palace.* St. John being known to the high priest, went in with Jesus, and finding Peter without, brought him in. Peter remained among the servants in the vestibule, as if a mere spectator. This was the first compromise, and while Jesus was before Annas, the first denial occurred. ¶ *Sat with the servants.* Around a fire of coals. It was cold enough to need it. The thermometer at Jerusalem ranges as low as 47° Fahrenheit.

59. *False witnesses.* See also Mark xiv. 55–59. They sought for some testimony which would affect His life. There was no difficulty in finding witnesses, filled with vague accusations of hatred and bigotry; but for a long time they could not find any whose story was consistent. They sought to examine Jesus by questions about His doctrine and disciples, that they might excite the rage of all parties against Him. But He refused to answer. He was there to suffer, and no longer to teach. He had lately spoken their doom in the woes of the twenty-third chapter. He leaves them to proceed for themselves, and to make out a charge of impiety to a capital degree, in their own way. They seem to have been sorely pressed for the materials to aid their malice.

60. *Found none.* The Sanhedrim were not too good to use false witnesses, if they could do so with any face. See Acts vi. 11–13. But they could find none. For as St. Mark says, their witness agreed not together. They could not condemn Jesus, on testimony, for any error in doctrine, nor for any conspiracy against the state. ¶ *Came two false witnesses.* This was the number required by the law. Deut. xvii. 6, 7; Heb. x. 28. This anxiety to obey the *letter* of the Mosaic law, while they violated the spirit of it, and neglected "mercy, judgment and truth," was true to the character which our Lord gave of the Scribes and Pharisees. The falsehood of these witnesses lay, not in

60 But found none: yea, though [a]many false witnesses came, *yet* found they none. At the last came two false witnesses,

61 And said, This *fellow* said,[b] I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.

62 And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what *is it which* these witness against thee?[c]

63 But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him,[d] I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ the Son of God.

64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless, I say un-

a Ps. 27. 12; & 35. 11. *b* John 2. 19–21. *c* Is. 53. 7; Ch. 27. 12, 14. *d* Lev. 5. 1; 1 Sam. 14. 24, 26; 1 Kings 22. 16.

their asserting an untruth, but in perverting the truth and wresting an innocent speech into a crime.

61. *And said, This fellow said.* Literally, This one, pointing at Him. ¶ *I am able, &c.* Jesus had said "Destroy this temple and in three days I will build it up." In these words *by telling them to destroy it*, He avoided the only charge which they sought to make out, namely, of conspiring to destroy the temple. See Acts vi. 14. Jesus had probably pointed to His own body, when He said this, to foretell His death and resurrection. But the witnesses differed, both as to the form and meaning of His words. According to St. Mark, they said, "We heard Him say, *I will destroy* this temple *made with hands*, and within three days I will build another made without hands." Mark xiv. 60. An ingenious and wicked perversion of His words. St. Mark adds, that "neither so did their witness agree together." The words contained two distinct accusations. 1. A conspiracy to destroy the temple. 2. A claim to the power of doing a miracle against their holy place. The first they knew was false. The last was a tender point on which it was best to say nothing.

62. *Jesus held His peace.* It was useless to make any reply. Luke xxii. 67, 68. There was no charge made out. Moreover His cause was prejudged. It was useless to reason with these raging lions who were thirsting for His blood. Ps. xxxv. 17. They would have tortured His words into some evil meaning if He had spoken.

63. *I adjure thee by the living God.* The high priest maddened by the failure of their machinations, and eager to rouse the passions of the assembly, some of whom probably were opposed to open injustice, changes his ground and compels Jesus to speak, on the only subject on which he could be sure of a reply to his purpose. *I adjure thee, &c.*, was the usual form of putting a man on his oath. See Lev. v. 1. When thus adjured or put on oath by any one *having authority*, it was wrong for any pious Jew to keep silence or conceal the truth. Our Saviour, notwithstanding the improper rage of the high priest, obediently and meekly replied to "the ruler of His people." As He had done so, it is of course right for His servants to do the same. See *Art. XXXIX.* "*Of a Christian man's oath.*" He answered and asserted His title to be the *Son of God*, and was condemned by the Sanhedrim *as guilty of blasphemy.* He used the words of Daniel, vii. 13, 14; Luke xxii. 69. If Christ had not been in a true sense *Son of God*, is it possible to imagine that He would have allowed the Jews to condemn Him to death on such a charge, when it would have been so easy to have satisfied them that He made no such claim? ¶ *The Christ.* The Messiah. See note, ch. i. 1. ¶ *The Son of God.* The question manifests that in the opinion of the high priest, to claim to be the Christ was also to claim to be the Son of God. He uses the two words as expressing the same thing. See ch. xvi. 16; Luke xxii. 67, 70.

to you,[a] Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on[b] the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken

a Dan. 7. 13. *b* Ps. 110. 1. *c* Lev. 24. 16; John 19. 7.

blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.

66 What think ye? They answered and said,[c] He is guilty of death.

64. *Thou hast said.* "Thou hast spoken only the truth. I am the Christ the Son of God. I affirm it in this solemn hour, though I must die for the claim. Your stratagem succeeds. I answer, and you may charge me with *blasphemy*. Still for all that, know that I will yet reign and be seen in the majesty which Daniel foretold." ¶ *Hereafter, &c.* In evidence of His claim they would yet see Him returning in glory. To sit on the right hand of power, is a phrase asserting His future Majesty. At His second coming (Heb. 1, 3; viii. 1), notwithstanding His present humiliation as a criminal before them, He would appear in His true dignity as their terrible Judge. ¶ *Coming in the clouds of heaven.* The first, or typical fulfilment of this occurred in the destruction of the city and the nation of the Jews. The entire fulfilment waits for the end of time, when Christ Jesus shall come, even as He was seen to go, in form as a man, but in transcendent glory, to judge the earth.

65. *Then the high priest rent his clothes.* A sign of his horror and indignation at a blasphemer. The Jews, as other Eastern nations, expressed great grief or mourning by this significant gesture. The high priest, however, was strictly forbidden to do this, from fear of God, whose servant he was. Lev. x. 6, xxi. 10. Some suppose that the command referred only to his pontifical robes; but this cannot well be, as the reason given why he should not do it is equally applicable to any robes. Others imagine a modification of the command, and that he might rend the bottom, but not the top. A similar act is recorded 1 Mac. xi. 71. St. Jerome says: "By this rending his garments, he shows that the Jews have lost the priestly glory, and that their high priest's throne was vacant. For by rending his garment he rent the veil of the Law which covered him." ¶ *He hath spoken blasphemy.* See note, ch. ix. 3. He hath under oath claimed to be the Son of God. To those who would not believe Him this claim was blasphemy. To us it is a precious truth. How easy was it for Jesus to have corrected the Jews if they had been in error. They were without excuse. He had shown them beforehand that He was a true Prophet, by all the proper signs of one. He had shown His immense powers by miracles of goodness and mercy. They disbelieved, not from want of evidence, but from want of *will*. They condemned Him as an impostor, without a pretence of examining His claims and life, whether He had taught the truth or done miracles of mercy.

66. *What think ye?* This He asked as presiding officer of the Sanhedrim. What *sentence* do you pronounce? ¶ *He is guilty of death.* He has done that for which the law of Moses adjudges the punishment of death. Lev. xxiv. 10–16. Stoning was the punishment for this crime. Acts. vii. 58; xiv. 19. The Council did not dare enforce their own sentence. Either they were responsible to the Roman governor who might have interrupted them, or, as stoning was to be done by the *whole people*, they may have felt doubts of the result, in case of a large assembly collecting, unless they could first work them up to a rage against Jesus. They thought it safer to resort to the Roman power, to carry out their plans. They thus fulfil the purposes of God, expressed in ancient prophecies. It was now the morning watch, between 3 and 6, A. M. of Friday. Luke xxii. 63–70. St. Luke

67 Then did they[a] spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote *him* with the ‖palms of their hands.

68 Saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?

a Is. 50, 6. ‖ Or, *rods.*

MIDNIGHT, THURSDAY—FRIDAY.

69 ¶ Now[b] Peter sat without in

b Mark 14. 66. &c.; Lu. 22. 55, &c.; John 18. 18.

says, "when it was day," i. e., when day was dawning. The denials of Peter, which had now taken place, mark the time as after three o'clock.

67. *They spit in His face.* A mark of the highest contempt. How far had their rage carried them, who thus forgot all the dignity and mercy which should have marked the elders of the people. See Is. i. 6. ¶ *And buffeted Him.* They struck Him on the head with their fists. This treatment was intended to show their hatred of Him, as a blasphemer. It was an impotent substitute for the stoning to death, from which policy withheld them. ¶ *Smote Him with the palms of their hands.* Upon the face or mouth. This was to mark their horror of what He had spoken. St. Augustine applies these words thus: "That *they did spit in His face*, signifies those who reject His proffered grace. They likewise buffet Him, who prefer their own honor to Him; and they smite Him on the face, who, blinded with unbelief, affirm that He is not yet come, disowning and rejecting His person." See Heb. vi. 6.

68. *Saying, Prophesy unto us.* St. Mark says that they had blindfolded Him, before they said this. They desired Him to divine who it was that smote Him. These cruel mockeries were as disgraceful to the Sanhedrim, as they intended them to be to Jesus. They became guilty of blasphemy. From His silence, they imagined themselves just and triumphant. But they were blaspheming God, fulfilling prophecies, and drawing on themselves a just judgment. They did not do these acts simply to gratify their hate. They were compelled to wait for daylight before they could go before the Roman governor, and they resort to these marks of contempt, while waiting, to stimulate the passions of the assembly: perhaps to prevent Jesus from speaking. The blessed Jesus, who with one word or look could have smitten them dead, endured all their indignities in silence: suffering them all, that we might learn of Him how we must bear our lighter sorrows and trials. Heb. xii. 1, 2. See Hymn 178.

69, 70. *The first denial of Peter, just before midnight.* Compare Mark xiv. 66–68; Luke xxii. 55–57; John xviii. 18.

69. *Now Peter sat without in the palace.* Jesus was, at the time, in the apartment of Annas. St. John being known to the high priest, had first passed in, but afterwards returned and brought Peter into the vestibule, by speaking to the maid-servant who kept the door. She noticing Peter at that time with John, and then seeing him remaining behind in the room where the servants were, asked him if he was not one of the friends of Jesus. It is probable that she had no design of injuring him, but simply wondered at his remaining there, while John had passed on. ¶ *Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee.* Thou *also*, or as well as John. As if she had said, Why do you shrink from this hour? Or perhaps she would have heard something of what had passed without. It does not seem that Peter was—unless for his attack on Malchus, which had been atoned for—at any time of this night, in any particular danger.

70. *But he denied before them all.* Denied that he was a disciple. It was a bold and shameful act. He denied that he understood what was said; that there was any ground for such an assertion. He was permitted to waver that we might see that none should dare to trust in his own strength.

the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee.

70 But he denied before *them* all, saying, I know not what thou sayest.

71 And when he was gone out into the porch, another *maid* saw him, and said unto them that were there, This *fellow* was also with Jesus of Nazareth.

72 And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man.

73 And after a while came unto *him* they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art *one* of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee.

74 Then began he to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew.

71–75. See also Mark iv. 69–7; 2–Luke xxii. 58–62; John xxviii. 25 27.

71. *When he was gone out into the porch.* Into the small room between the doorway and the larger rooms. He was in a fearful state. He could not bear the looks of those around the fire, and he goes away to hide his confusion. Yet he *cannot* go out of sight of his beloved Master. The cock crowed for midnight. Who can describe his mental state, tossed and tormented between love for his Master and fear of his countrymen, the convictions of his faith, and the agony of a mind stained by such a sin! ¶ *Another maid saw him.* Also a man spoke to him at the same moment (Luke). This happened between one and two in the morning. The scene of the trial had gone on. Peter was engrossed in watching its progress; betraying possibly by his anxious looks his unusual interest in it. We may suppose that his mind was confused by the strange meekness and submission to disgrace of Jesus; perhaps it was wavering back to its former Jewish implicit confidence in his nation's rulers.

72. *I do not know the man.* The very words in which Jesus had predicted it. Luke xxii. 34. Peter denies all knowledge of Him, whether as Christ or as Jesus, and cuts himself loose from him, for the time, by apostasy.

73. *And after a while.* About an hour after, between two and three A. M. Peter, now desperate, angry, and filled with evil passions, returns to the room where the fire was burning (John xviii. 25), resolved to brave it out. The repetition of sin never leaves a man as it found him. He changes rapidly. Peter has lost shame. His Master is *condemned*, and he has lost something of his love, in the consequences of ruin to all his earthly hopes, which that condemnation produced. He had before sought silence, but now he becomes bold and talkative. ¶ *Thy speech bewrayeth thee.* The dialect of the Galileans was uncouth and broad, from the constant mingling with foreigners. It inclined to the Samaritan and Syriac. Talking loudly, the bystanders notice his excitement and the peculiarity of his speech, and conclude that he was from Galilee. A kinsman of Malchus observes him, and, with others, urges on him this peculiarity, as a reason for supposing him a follower of Jesus. But now he was in greater fear and also in bitter anger. How rapidly he has fallen under the power of Satan.

74. *Then began he, &c.* He began to anathematize *himself*, and to swear with oaths, that he had no acquaintance with Jesus. Peter does not seem to have been in any danger. The Pharisees showed no desire to injure the disciples, nor does the question seem to have been urged in anger. For all his swearing, there is no doubt but that he was known to be a disciple. Still they suffered him to depart unquestioned. We must conclude, therefore, that Peter, like the wicked, was in fear where no fear was. Ps. liii. 5. He was for the time in mortal sin. He was not yet re-

75 And Peter [a]remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.

[a] Lu. 22. 31, 34.

generated by the Holy Ghost (John vii. 39), and his repentings were accepted, and his sins forgiven. We may well believe that he never forgave himself the acts of that dreadful night.

75. *And Peter remembered, &c.* This was three o'clock. St. Luke mentions, that Jesus turned and *looked* upon Peter. The cocks at the same moment crew. Won by the look of tender compassion, and reminded of the prophecy of his fall, the mysterious foreknowledge of his Master flashed again upon him. The spell of evil was broken. How perfect the love, how pure the sympathy of Jesus, who, in the midst of His own sorrows, could turn to win back to Himself and salvation, a recreant follower, to "renew him again unto repentance," and by this sign of reproachful affection, to assure him of forgiveness! ¶ *And he went out and wept bitterly.* Well might he do so. Stung by shame and reviving love for Jesus, he rushed out from the scene of cowardice and guilt, and, as we read in the Gospel of St. Mark, written under the eye of Peter himself, *casting his mantle over his head*, as a sign of utter desolation, and unutterable grief, *he wept.* See Jer. xiv. 3, 4. He would not suffer St. Mark to add the words "wept *bitterly*," lest it might seem like some mitigation of his fault. Leaving him thus, the saddest sinner on whom that morning light shone, let us ponder this example of fearful sin. 1. We learn from it the danger of self-confidence in spiritual things. He imagined that in himself he was able to endure all things for Christ. He dreamed only of conquering armies and plans for human glory. He knew his own energy and courage. But the simple question of a poor little girl, destroyed the courage of one who could perhaps have led armies to deadly battle without a fear. Human courage when sanctified, is sometimes useful to the Church; but the courage to be *humble* is always so. 2. We should compare carefully the two sides of St. Peter's character—Peter the self-trusting disciple, with Peter the humble Apostle. The former said: "I will go with thee, though all may desert," depending on his own courage and fidelity. The other, after this experience, warns us, as if with an echo from that sad hall of Caiaphas: "Be humble, sober, vigilant." 1 Pet. v. 6–9. 3. Behold the tender care of Jesus for His disciple. The disciples were as yet only children, hardly born. They had not the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit, and could not compare spiritual things, nor know the mode of resisting all evil by the gifts of grace. Hence Jesus foretells his fall and rising again, to prevent him from despairing. And He, by one look, touches the fountain of his heart and reclaims him. 4. Although this sin was committed before that baptism of the Holy Ghost, yet as Peter had the great privilege of knowing his duty and danger, from the instructions of Jesus in person, his case bears upon and explains the Sixteenth Article of our Church, "Of Sin after Baptism."—"Not every deadly sin, willingly committed after baptism, is sin against the Holy Ghost, and unpardonable. Wherefore the grant of repentance is not to be denied to such as fall into sin after baptism. After we have received the Holy Ghost, we may depart from grace given, and (we may) arise again, and amend our lives. And therefore they are to be condemned, which say, they can no more sin as long as they live here, or deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent."

CHAPTER XXVII.

1, 2. *Jesus is delivered to Pilate.* See Mark xv. 1; Luke xxiii. 1, 2; John xviii. 28–32.

1. *When the morning was come.* Early in the morning, between three and six, called the morning watch. ¶ *Took counsel.* This was a matter of no little difficulty, and required shrewd management. Pilate was a stern and obstinate

CHAPTER XXVII.

Good Friday.

WHEN the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people[a] took counsel against Jesus to put him to death.

a Ps. 2. 2.

2 And when they had bound him, they led *him* away,[b] and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

3 ¶ Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented him-

b Ch. 29. 19; Acts 3. 13.

ruler, and had before this time shown traits of a disposition not easily led. Being an idolater he would disregard the charge of *blasphemy*. They must therefore prepare their measures beforehand, and offer before his tribunal some charges against Jesus, which he could regard as contrary to the Roman laws, and which, by exciting his passions, would enlist his sympathies. With a stern and haughty man there was nothing so likely to be successful as the charge they adopted—that Jesus perverted the nation, forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, and making Himself a king. Luke xxiii. 2. They succeeded, with great difficulty, in wresting from Pilate the permission for His death. They could not put Jesus to death by their own laws, for the Romans had taken away from them the right of capital punishment, and they did not dare to resort to open violence, as in the case of St. Stephen. Acts vii. ¶ *To put Him to death.* To mature a plan by which they might compass His death. They were suspicious of the affections of the people and the obstinacy of the Roman governor. They must see their way clear before they commit themselves.

2. *Bound Him.* Jesus had at first been bound in the garden, in order to secure Him. But His bands had probably been loosed. It was their custom to send prisoners bound to the Roman governor, as a sign that they had already condemned them. ¶ *Pontius Pilate the governor.* This man, whose name is to be perpetuated in the creeds of the Church, until his Victim summons him to the bar of the last judgment, had been appointed *procurator* of Judea by the Roman emperor Tiberius, about six years before this event. He continued in the office for three years afterwards, in all ten years. The duties of the office were usually only of a pecuniary nature, but in certain cases were enlarged, with certain subordinate powers of governing the people. Pilate was described by King Agrippa, who knew him well, as a man naturally inflexible and obstinately self-willed. He defied the Jewish people on several occasions, until the clamor against him succeeded in effecting his disgrace with the emperor Caligula. He was banished to Vienne in Gaul, where he is said to have died by his own hand. His usual residence was Cæsarea. He was now in Jerusalem on account of the great crowds coming to the Passover, and the turbulence usual at such times. He could safely have set Jesus free, and probably would have done so had he been importuned to do it. St. John tells us that the Jews would not enter the hall of judgment, which was in the tower of Antonia, lest they should be defiled by contact with the heathen (Numb. xix. 22), or by entering houses in which there was leaven, and be prevented from eating the Passover. These impious men were tender of the letter of the law even in the midst of their wicked malice.

3–10. The remorse of Judas, which St. Matthew relates in this place, as if to dispose of it, may be supposed to have occurred after the final condemnation of Jesus. The Evangelist does not mean to say that it occurred just at this time, but as a consequence of the condemnation. For we can hardly imagine any of the chief priests and elders to have been found in the temple until after the sentence of Pilate. ¶ *Repented himself.* It is impossible to follow the mazes of his dark mind in its terrible

self, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

4 Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the[a] innocent blood. And they said, What *is that* to us? see thou *to that*.

a 2 Kings 24. 4.

5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and[b] hanged himself.

6 And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into

b 2 Sam. 17. 23; Acts 1. 18.

progress of crime and despair, or to say what exact motive led him to begin his downward passage to "his own place." In Scripture he is termed a thief (John xii. 6) and a devil (John vi. 70), meaning that his prevailing passions were avarice and malice. Also Satan entered into him, and gave a supernatural keenness to these passions. He may have joined Jesus with a low worldly desire for wealth. Being a keen-sighted man he may have been first to discover that Jesus would never gratify such desires. Looking around him for some way of escape and return to the world, and enraged by a rebuke which he deserved (John xiii. 18), he hurried in a moment of anger to the chief priests and accepted their bribes. Now terrified by the result of his action, and harrowed by his convictions of the purity of the life and teachings of Christ, he wakes to a late remorse. It was, however, only horror and remorse at the effects of his anger and covetousness. It was not that deep repentance which seeks God's grace in order to cut off the causes of sins.

4 *I have sinned.* I have done wrong and broken the law of God. Ex. xxiii. 7. Humble confession and restitution, though necessary to true repentance, do not always prove penitence to be true. ¶ *I have betrayed innocent blood.* The life of an innocent person. Judas is an unwilling, and, therefore, a valuable witness to the perfect innocence of Jesus. He had been His disciple, and known Him in all situations for three years, and had heard all His doctrines, public and private; surely, if it were possible to have found a fault with Him, Judas would have urged it now, as an excuse for his deed. ¶ *What is that to us?* "We do not care for your feelings. You did what we wished, and we paid you for it: as to the rest, we care nothing." This reply was in keeping with all their conduct. They should have paused and examined into the causes of this repentance of Judas; or, at least, have tried to satisfy him that they had done right in condemning Jesus. "Observe, that he repents only when his sin is finished and complete; for so the devil suffers not those who are not watchful, to see the evil before they bring it to an end." —*St. Chrysostom.*

5. *And he cast down the pieces of silver.* See ch. xxvi. 15. This was the end of all his dreams of avarice—thirty pieces of silver, which burn into his soul with the guilt of remorse, until he dashes them away from him in hatred. It was the price of blood; and his ingratitude rose up before him, until his whole soul is in an agony which he cannot endure. That thing now so fair and desirable to us, but which conscience tells us is wrong, if we pluck it, will turn to poison in our hands, either to ruin the soul, or make it weep in bitter repentance over the loss of innocence. James i. 14, 15. ¶ *Went and hanged himself.* He seems to have done it in such haste and perturbation of mind, that the rope gave way, and he was precipitated down a steep place, and disembowelled on the sharp rocks. Acts i. 18. Every one who was hanged on a tree was pronounced accursed by the law. Deut. xxi. 23. And an ancient writer says of Judas: "He hung himself to show that he was hateful both to heaven and earth." It certainly proved his desperation, that he dared to adopt a mode of death which was held in abhorrence by his countrymen.

the treasury, because it is the price of blood.

7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.

a Acts 1. 19.

8 Wherefore that field was called,[c] The field of blood, unto this day.

9 Then was [b]fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the proph-

b Zech. 11. 12, 13.

6. *It is not lawful, &c.* Moneys which had been made abominable by certain crimes, were in no case to be offered to the Lord. Deut. xxiii. 18. It was the custom of the Jews, and afterwards of Christians, to refuse the alms of executioners in all cases. And by inference, money which had been gained by treachery, when life was concerned, was put in the same list. ¶ *For to put them into the treasury.* Into the alms-chest, wherein offerings to the Lord were placed. It implies that all things which were put therein, were solemnly devoted to the service of the Lord. This alms-chest was kept in the court of the women. ¶ *The price of blood.* The price which was given for His life. We perceive in these confessions the true character of that transaction between Judas and the priests. Judas confessed to having betrayed *blood*, the priests to having bought it, and the *field of blood* bought by the money, perpetuated the memory of the foul bargain. Observe the false religion of these rulers. They have compassed the death of an innocent man, and stained their souls with blood, that no river or ocean could wash away; but they dare not pollute the treasury.

7. *They took counsel.* They consulted what to do with it. This was, undoubtedly, after the death of Jesus. They were most careful councillors in all money transactions. See ch. xxiii. 16. ¶ *Potter's field, to bury strangers in.* A field which the potters had used. It is said (in Acts i. 18) of Judas, that *he* purchased a field with the reward of iniquity, and was the first to mark it as a field of blood by his own death. And this purchase he did make, inasmuch as he furnished the means. Perhaps the priests also put his name prominent in the purchase. It is a usual thing for a writer to represent one as doing that which he causes another to do. ¶ *To bury strangers in.* To bury the Jews, who, coming from foreign places to attend the feasts, died in Jerusalem. "It was brought about by God's providence, that the Saviour's price should not minister means of excess to sinners, but repose to foreigners; that thence Christ might both redeem the living by the shedding of His blood, and harbor the dead by the price of His passion."—*St. Augustine.*

8. *The field of blood.* Called in the native tongue *Aceldama* (Acts i. 19), meaning the same. The facts of this account of the death of Jesus were of course perpetuated, by the existence of this field as a burying-place. The Apostle, therefore, in referring to it, shows that he challenges investigation into the truth of his story. ¶ *To this day.* At the time when this Gospel was written by St. Matthew; eight years or more (see Introduction) after the Crucifixion. It is shown also to *this* day. "Near this spot (that is Gehenna, the valley of Hinnom, which word is used as a type of the place of punishment,) is Acelda-ma, or the field of blood of the traitor Judas. It is a small plot of ground overhung with one precipice, and looking down another into the gloomy glen below."

9. *Spoken by Jeremy the prophet.* There is a peculiarity of style in this passage, so different from common modes of citing passages from other writers, as to cause some difficulty in explaining it. Our ignorance must bear the blame of the difficulty, i. e. our ignorance of the exact words of St. Matthew; or, if these are his words, of his meaning in using them. He has evidently quoted the prophet according to the sense, and not the words. No such passage occurs in the writings of Jeremiah. There is something like it

et, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued,[‖] whom they of the children of Israel did value;

10 And gave them for the pot-

‖ Or, *whom they bought of the children of Israel.* *a* John 18. 37.

ter's field, as the Lord appointed me.

11 And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying,[a] Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest.

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in Zechariah, ch. xi. 12, 13. Compare Jeremiah xxxii. 9. There are four explanations why the name Jeremy occurs instead of Zachary. I. *The names may have been mistaken in transcribing.* They were sometimes written in a contracted form—*Iriou* for Jeremy; *Zriou* for Zachary. In this form it would be only the mistake of one letter. But St. Jerome, who is good authority on such points, declares that the greatest number and the most ancient manuscripts in his time, had the name of Jeremy. II. Jeremy may be used here for *the book of the prophets,* as being the first in rank on the list. This has the appearance of being invented for the occasion. There is no evidence of any such custom in the New Testament. III. Or again, it is urged by some learned men, that the word Jeremy was not written by St. Matthew, *but was added by some unlearned transcriber.* Our English translators seem to have expressed their opinion against this, by inserting the word in common types as authentic. IV. It is suggested by others, that St. Matthew referred to some action and words of Jeremiah, not recorded by him in his prophecies, but handed down in some traditional form, and recorded in substance by the prophet Zechariah. St. Jerome declares, "that he read a Hebrew book, given him by a Hebrew of the Nazarene sect, an apocryphal Jeremias, in which he found the very words here quoted." So in 2 Maccabees, ii. 1–9, we find many words recorded as spoken by Jeremiah, which cannot be found in his canonical prophecies. But St. Jerome says of it all: "After all, I am rather inclined to think that the passage was taken by Matthew out of Zecharias, in the usual manner of the Apostles and Evangelists, when they quote from the Old Testament, *neglecting the words, and attending only to the sense.*" The Christian reader desires, in all such cases, to avoid the idea that the Evangelists could have fallen into error. These minor difficulties are left in our path, as a trial of faith, to show us that we may not depend wholly on our own short-sighted knowledge. ¶ *Valued.* This was the pagan price of a slave. These words in the prophet, occurred in a vision, wherein he asks the people to put a value on himself, a servant of the Lord. They rate him at the price of a slave, i. e. despise him and the Lord. See note, ch. xxvi. 15. This he throws to the potter. All these shadowy symbols were *acted prophecies* of these events.

11–14. *The trial before Pilate.* See Mark xv. 2–5; Luke xxiii. 3, 4; John xviii. 33–38. Read also Luke xxiii. 5–12.

11. *And Jesus stood before the governor.* By the law (Numb. xix. 22) whoever touched any unclean person, among whom the later Jews reckoned Gentiles, was unclean, and unable to celebrate the Passover. Acts x. 28. The Jews, therefore, would not go into the Castle of Antonia, which was occupied by Pilate. To accommodate them, a sort of court or judgment seat had been prepared outside the walls of the castle, called in Hebrew Gabbatha, or the pavement (John xix. 13), probably a raised space, paved with stones of divers colors. The seat for Pilate was fixed here, and a door leading into the inner hall. The Saviour was carried within, and arraigned before the Romans. Pilate came out to hear the accusations against Him. ¶ *Art thou the King of the Jews?*

12 And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing.

13 Then saith Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee?

14 And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly.

15 Now at *that* feast, the gov-

This question Pilate asked after hearing the accusation of the Jews. See John xviii. 28, 40. As Messiah, He claimed to be King. But His kingdom could not in any way disturb the lawful temporal authorities. The charge made against Him rested on this claim, which the priests knew that He would not deny. They also falsely added that Jesus had forbidden to pay tribute to Cæsar. Luke xxiii. 2. ¶ *Thou sayest.* Thou sayest what I am. Yea, it is so. Jesus explained to him that His kingdom *was not of this world.* John xviii. 36. Pilate seems thereupon to have taken something like a right view of the case, thinking Jesus a teacher of truth, and fond of using royal titles to enhance the dignity of philosophy. He does not seem to have looked on Him as in any degree a demagogue, or exciter of sedition. He was fully satisfied of His innocence. John xviii. 38.

12. *He answered nothing.* He made no reply to idle clamors against Him. There was true wisdom in the course He pursued. He answered Pilate when questioned, and satisfied him of His innocence. But He did not plead for His life against the accusations of the Jews. It were as well speaking to the wild winds, as to the angry crowd. They had heard Him and rejected Him, and now He submits to the known will of God.

13. *Then said Pilate.* Marvelling at His manner, so gentle, firm, suffering, meek, so devoid of impatience, anger, haste, or any human infirmity; Pilate asked Him why He made no reply. But even then, as a lamb before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth. His silence and want of fear, His open, ready confession of their main charge that He was a King in the realm of truth, were a full and entire refutation. But He submitted, as to the will of God, with a truly royal patience. ¶ *They witness against Thee?* How many charges they bring. Mark xv. 3. They charged Him with the crime most hateful to a conqueror, in a subject land, *sedition.* And the Jews found terrible reason to regret the facility of the Romans in punishing it. Jesus knew that Pilate did not believe this charge, and He was silent.

14. *To never a word.* He did not make a set answer. It does not mean that Jesus appeared in any degree sullen, but that He did not pretend to refute the *words*, i. e. the charges brought against Him. He replied readily to all proper questions. ¶ *Marvelled greatly.* Was much astonished at this unparalleled dignity in a person brought into such danger. Truly there was sufficient to cause this *marvelling;* a word which implies not merely surprise, but admiration and reflection whether the claim of Jesus to be King, in the spiritual sense, could really be true. Pilate, being in great perplexity, learned at this juncture that Jesus had lived in Galilee, which was in the jurisdiction of Herod Antipas. This tetrarch was at the time in Jerusalem. To escape from the difficulty, and at the same time pay a mark of respect to Herod, perhaps imagining that Herod would be better able to decide the matter, Pilate sent Jesus to him. Luke xxiii. 5–12. *This was the first step of Pilate's fall*—a compromise with conscience. After Herod had returned Him, it was harder for Pilate to set Jesus free. Herod who had hardened his heart to finally destroy John the Baptist, after being mortified by the silence of Christ, treated Him with scorn, and sent Him back to Pilate. Pleased with the mutual compliment these rulers made a peace, which has been turned in Christian nations into a scornful proverb. It was now harder for Pilate to do right, for he should have dismissed the case at first, as wanting evidence. Be he has given

ernor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would.

16 And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas.

17 Therefore, when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus, which is called Christ?

18 (For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.)

19 ¶ When he was set down on the judgment-seat, his wife

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the trial a form of importance, and made it notorious to one who had been his enemy, and might readily become so again.

15–23. *Pilate proposes a choice of victims.* See Mark xv. 6–14; Luke xxiii. 13–19; John xviii. 39–40. Read also Luke xxiii. 20–22; John xix. 1–12.

15. *At that feast.* The Passover. ¶ *The governor was wont to release, &c.* It was his custom to do this. The verb from which *wont* is derived is obsolete. Pilate came up usually from Cæsarea to Jerusalem during the great feasts, and in order to secure popularity, and give importance to his visit, would release some prisoner on the petition of the Jews. In a conquered country there would be always a class of prisoners who appeared to suffer in the public good as patriots. To release these would be an act of grace especially pleasing to the nation. Barabbas, robber and murderer as he was, had probably done things which gave him a reputation with his own people. Sedition veiled its criminality under the name of patriotism.

16. *A notable prisoner.* One well known for his bold, seditious spirit, and rendered notorious for a particular act of rebellion. His crimes were popular. Luke xxiii. 19. He had led a rebellion against the Romans, and in the confusion resulting had committed murder. It is difficult to suppose that the common people would have claimed this pardon for a common brawler or thief. This man had been skilful to hide his ambition, avarice and cruelty under the guise of liberty and patriotism. It is the voice of inspiration which has stamped him as "a robber." Had the Jews written his biography, it might have been a eulogy.

17. *Whom will ye that I release unto you?* Pilate saw clearly that the whole accusation against Jesus was groundless. His first experiment of sending Him to Herod, having failed, he now proposes a new plan. It was a second *compromise* with his conscience. He ought at once to have given Him security. He probably meant well, and supposed that his plan would succeed. In fact, the priests were obliged to bestir themselves and *persuade* the people before they could succeed in their malice. Verse 20. ¶ *Jesus which is called Christ.* He gives Him the mildest title, in order to prevent any excitement of passion from disturbing their choice. Afterwards to annoy the priests, he gives Jesus the royal title of King of the Jews. It was done with ingenuity worthy a better result. Pilate's error lay in not foreseeing that in giving the choice to the multitude, he in a measure *lost it himself.*

18. *For he knew that for envy.* Not for crime. The word *envy* in ancient writings, implies somewhat more that it now does. It signifies all those hostile feelings which are included under the general term, *unpopularity.* Fear of His power with the people, jealousy at His purity, His wisdom and miracles, a mean desire to crush a good and great man, with all the wicked malicious feelings of a fickle multitude, are ranked under the word. Says Remigius, "John explains what their envy was, when he says, "Behold, the world is gone after Him (John xii. 19); and if we let Him thus alone all men will believe on Him." John xi. 48." We see in the order of events, the Divine hand guiding things, in a strange course, to fulfil His own purposes. Pilate, the stern and inflexible, appears weak and wavering. The subjects dictate to their conqueror. The peo-

sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream, because of him.

20 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.

21 The governor answered and

ple prefer a murderer, to One whom but a few days before they had hailed as Messiah. All work according to blind passions and violent self-will, yet in their rage, work out the plan of salvation for others—of ruin to themselves.

19. *In the judgment seat.* The seat or throne erected in the open court, for judgment. Pilate had thus far passed in and out before the people, *in an informal* and friendly manner. He now assumes the seat of power, and by the act shows that he proceeds to a regular trial. His assuming this seat may have inclined them to do as he wished; but after persuasion of the priests, they call for the deliverance of Barabbas. ¶ *His wife sent unto him.* This incident marks the correctness of the writer, by a proof, which being too small to be intentional, is the stronger evidence. Tacitus informs us that it was only in the reign of Tiberius, that the governors had obtained leave to take their wives with them. This woman's name was Procula, and tradition relates that she was led by this dream to become a Christian. ¶ *Have thou nothing to do.* "He is a just man. Do not be an instrument in condemning Him." This incident, according to the opinions of the Romans, ought to have determined Pilate, and probably would have done so, some time before. It seems as if St. Matthew mentions his having assumed his *judgment seat*, as if to point out the reason why it does not deter him. He has opened the trial formally, and is ashamed to withdraw from it, for a woman's dream. ¶ *That just man.* One innocent of crime. Pilate was deeply affected by this message. He asks the priests what evil they could charge against Jesus, and in his act of washing his hands, as clearing himself of responsibility, he repeats the words of his wife, verse 24. ¶ *I have suffered many things this day in a dream, &c.* Dreams were considered by all the ancient nations, as indications of the Divine pleasure, in difficult cases. Among the Jews, the opinion was established on the certain basis of inspiration. It was one mode of revelation. 1 Sam. xxviii. 6. 15; Gen. xxxi. 11, 24; Numb. xii. 6. The Egyptians (Gen. xl. 5, 8; xli. 15), the Chaldeans (Dan. ii. 1, 2, 3, &c.) and the Greeks, and Romans after them, placed great confidence in dreams of certain kinds. Daniel is praised for his skill in explaining dreams. Dan. i. 17; v. 12. In the New Testament, the Angel of the Lord is said to have appeared in dreams to Joseph. Matt. i. 20; ii. 12. If it be asked, whether it is proper to believe that dreams are still used as a vehicle of Divine communication with men; it is enough to answer that the canon of Scripture is now closed, and the revelation finished, so that the chief reason for consulting the information of the visions of the night is removed. See Deut. xviii. 14. 15. This dream of Pilate's wife was correct, and Pilate believed it to be a true monition from the Divinity.

20. *Persuaded the multitude.* The Jewish rulers perceived the intention of the Roman governor, and saw also the wavering of the crowd. They found it necessary to persuade them to the course which they wished them to follow. This they could do, as the people usually follow readily any guide to whom they have been accustomed, whether right or wrong. ¶ *And destroy Jesus.* Pilate does not seem to have taken in this result, when he proposed the choice of prisoners; that he was in fact putting them before the people on the same footing, so that the one who was not chosen should bear the punishment of the other. It did not follow that, because Barabbas was spared, therefore Jesus should be destroyed. But when he gave the multitude the decision of the two cases, he seemed to bind him-

said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.

22 Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ? *They* all say unto him, Let him be crucified.

23 And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.

24 ¶ When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but *that* rather a tumult was made, he took [a]water, and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye *to it.*

25 Then answered all the peo-

[a] Deut. 21. 6.

self to abide by their judgment. Terrified by the consequence of his own compromise, by the admonition of his wife, by the innocence of Jesus, and threatened by the mob with present sedition, and future complaint to the arbitrary tyrant Tiberius, Pilate, the man who could be as stern as a rock when a few paltry brazen eagles were concerned, wavered and yielded. Thus end all compromises with conscience and right!

21. *The twain.* The two, Jesus or Barabbas.

23. *Why, what evil hath he done?* This question was asked of them three times (Luke), so anxious was he for the escape of Jesus, yet so intimidated by the dilemma in which he had placed himself. He offered another compromise with them, that he would chastise Jesus and let Him go. But the passions of the crowd gain impetus by indulgence. They are now, as David described them long before, "strong bulls of Bashan," "raving and roaring lions:" and again, "many dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me." Ps. xxii. 12, 13, 16. ¶ *Let Him be crucified.* See note, verse 35. This shout, swelled now by a thousand throats which but a few days before had shouted Hosanna, overcomes all opposition. This was perhaps the punishment due to Barabbas, and the offer of his name may have suggested it.

24. *He took water.* He makes a final appeal to their feelings. Pilate does every thing, but what he should have done. It was common among ancient nations to express their feelings by expressive actions. The Jews washed their hands with water, in case of a suspected murder. Deut. xxi. 6. David makes a poetic use of this custom. Ps. xxvi. 6. Classic authors inform us of the same custom prevailing among the heathen. Humanly speaking the act of Pilate was impressive. He manifested that he did not condemn Jesus. But no water could wash away the guilt of the act. He was *Judge*, and was bound to either condemn or pardon. He could not relieve himself from responsibility. He yielded "because a tumult was made," and sought to bribe high Heaven by a trifling sign of his reluctance. ¶ *See ye to it.* "Behold my refusal to be the judge to condemn this innocent man. Take the responsibility upon yourselves." This was out of the question. Certain responsibilities *cannot* be put away. We may well pray against sins of omission, or as the Prayer Book hath it, "sins, negligences, and ignorances;" and again, "we have left undone those things which we ought to have done." And we may expect forgiveness. But we may not safely venture to do *nothing*, in cases where we are bound to act, and imagine that we thus escape from guilt. To do nothing is often as great a crime, as to do wickedly is at other times.

25. *His blood be on us, &c.* We take the responsibility and the penalty. It was an awful imprecation, and awfully was it answered. Jesus had said that on that generation should come all the righteous blood shed on the earth. Ch,

ple, and said, [a]His blood *be* on us, and on our children.

26 ¶ Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had [b]scourged Jesus, he delivered *him* to be crucified.

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall,‖ and gathered unto him the whole band *of soldiers*.

28 And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe.

29 [c]And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put *it*

a Deut. 19. 10; Josh. 2. 19; 1 Kings 2. 23; Acts 5. 28. *b* Is. 53. 5.

‖ Or, *governor's house.* *c* Ps. 69. 19; Is. 53. 3.

xxiii. 35. The Jews, blinded by passion, call down the curse upon themselves. It was fulfilled soon afterwards in a series of misfortunes and crimes, such as the world had never seen. In that memorable siege of their city, a million and a half of them perished by every imaginable torture, and in the exercise of the most horrible passions. They doted in superstition and despair. Signs from heaven, and horrors on earth terrified them, till death seemed a blessing. The city became so monstrous for crimes, that their very despair produced such courage as the Romans had never before met with. The curse still rests upon their children, scattering them in all the earth. Samaritans on Mount Gerizim till this day maintain their sacrifice as of old. Christian altars rise in Jerusalem. But the Moslem debars the Jew from the sacred precincts of Moriah. He has no altar, and can only go softly to the foot of the Mount where his fathers worshipped, to mourn the desolations of his nation.

26. *And when he had scourged Jesus.* Had ordered it done. See note, ch. x. 17. Scourging increased the pains of that mode of death. The instrument used was the *flagella*. It was termed by a Latin writer the *horrible* scourge, from its severity. St. Jerome says: "It should be known that Pilate administered the Roman law, which enacted that every one who was crucified should be first scourged. Jesus then is given up to the soldiers to be beaten, and they tore with whips that most holy body and capacious bosom of God." ¶ *He delivered Him.* He gave sentence to that effect. We behold a judge of the most enlightened nation of that age, condemning a man whom he voluntarily declares innocent. We see in this the providence of God, proving the faultlessness of the Saviour, by the confessions of all those who were interested to make Him out to be guilty. Pilate, Herod, Procula, Judas, the Roman centurion and the thief on the cross combine to pay homage, and bear witness to His innocence.

27–31. *Jesus is mocked by the soldiers.* See also Mark xv. 16–20.

27. *Into the common hall.* The Latin word is *Prætorium*, the hall of the Prætor. The sentence had been given in the open air. The soldiers take Jesus back into the Castle of Antonia, to the hall adjoining their own quarters, in order to make preparations for His execution. ¶ *The whole band.* A *speira*, or cohort, here called band, was the tenth part of a legion, and varied in number from three hundred to one thousand men, according to the size of the legion. Being a time of peace, it was probably the smaller number in this case.

28. *They stripped Him.* Probably of His outer robe, in order to carry on their brutal sport. ¶ *A scarlet robe.* Some worn-out garment of royalty. This robe mentioned was a military cloak of purple, worn by the Roman Emperors and chief men. It was confined on the right shoulder by a clasp. The color was called indifferently scarlet or purple. It was put on Him to ridicule His title of royalty. The insult in their minds was probably meant as a mark of contempt toward the whole Jewish nation.

29. *Had platted.* Had woven by a few turns of the flexible branches one

upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!

30 And they[a] spit upon him, and took the reed and smote him on the head.

31 And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify *him*.

32 And as they came[b] out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross.

33 And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, A place of a skull,

a Is. 53. 7.

b Num. 15. 35; 1 Kings 21. 13; Acts 7. 58; Heb. 13. 12.

on the other. ¶ *A crown of thorns.* A wreath or chaplet of a thorny bush growing near. Great use was made by the Romans of chaplets of the leaves of laurel or myrtle. They now crown Jesus with this mock wreath in ridicule. ¶ *And a reed.* In imitation of the sceptre carried by kings. Esther iv. 11. These reeds grow in Palestine in marshy places, especially along the banks of the Jordan. They are light, flexible and strong, and are often brought to this country by travellers, and made into walking canes, for which it is probable they were then used. ¶ *Hail, King of the Jews!* This *hail!* was a usual salutation to their own Emperors. It was notorious that the sceptre had departed from Judah; and the shameless priests had for almost the first time declared, "We have no king but Cæsar." The soldiers mock at the nation in the person of Jesus. They were only the more enraged at His imperturbable patience.

30. *Spit upon Him.* Says Bp. Porteus, with a proper feeling: "We hasten over this scene of insolence and outrage, with averted eyes, and can scarcely believe that any thing in the shape of man could have proceeded to this extreme of wanton barbarity. What a difference is there between this treatment of the innocent and injured Jesus and that of the vilest criminal in our own country, previous to his execution! And how strongly does this mark the difference between the spirit of Paganism and the spirit of Christianity!" ¶ *Smote Him on the head.* In horrid cruelty, to drive the sharp thorns into the living flesh. These impious cruelties were doubtless perpetrated while a part of the band was engaged in preparations for the execution. The time of day must have been about *eight o'clock* A.M.

32. *As they came out.* Out of the city. Both among the Jews and Romans, criminals were executed without the city walls. See Numb. xv. 36; 1 Kings xxi. 13. ¶ *A man of Cyrene, Simon.* He was a Jew, dwelling in that part of Libya called Pentapolis Cyrenaica, in which was a large colony of Jews. Like others he had come up to Jerusalem to attend the feast. Happy for him, if he learned to bear the spiritual cross, from the experience of that day. ¶ *Him they compelled, &c.* Our Lord, according to custom, carried his cross until nature gave way. He had then been twelve hours, counting from His agony in the garden, under the severest suffering of mind and body. Exhausted nature could endure no longer, and He sank down in the street under the heavy load. As Simon was passing they compelled him to bear it after Jesus. Note that it says, *compelled* him. For he did it unwillingly. It was an ignominious office. A great company of people and women followed Him, bewailing and lamenting Him; to whom our Saviour made the prediction again of the calamities coming upon the nation. Luke xxiii. 27–31.

33. *Golgotha.* This is a Hebrew word, as St. John informs us, meaning a place of a skull, either from its shape,

34 ¶ They gave him [a]vinegar to drink, mingled with gall: and when he had tasted *thereof*, he would not drink.

[a] Ps. 69. 21.

35 And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be [b]fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet; They

[b] Ps. 22. 18.

being a hillock; or a place of skulls, being a place for the execution of criminals. The translators have inserted the word of Latin derivation, *Calvary*, in St. Luke's account, for his Greek word, *Kranion*, meaning a skull. After this great sacrifice upon it, it became holy, as being the great altar of human salvation. It has been resorted to by pious Christians in all ages and from all lands. It has drawn the city around it. A great part of Mount Zion is now excluded to make room for it. A magnificent church crowns it, *the Church of the Holy Sepulchre*, on the spot where, according to tradition, Helena, the mother of the emperor Constantine, discovered the cross. Of the tradition there may be some doubt, but there can be none of the actual site of the hill of Calvary.

34 *Vinegar to drink mingled with gall.* To relieve His pains. St. Mark says: "Wine mingled with myrrh." The wine of the Roman soldiers hardly deserved the name; as it soon fermented, and became hard and sour to the taste. The gall and myrrh are words meaning in this case the same thing, *a bitter infusion*. *Gall* translates a Hebrew word signifying any exceeding bitter herb (Ps. lxix. 21), which St. Mark tells us was myrrh. This infusion was a temptation to partial suicide. It stupefied the mind and nerves, and shortened life. It was offered by some pitying person, to shorten His agonies. If suicide is ever justifiable, it was then. And the Christian must confess it universally wrong and criminal, when he beholds Jesus under His ignominious burden of woes, refusing to shorten or elude one of them, by means of stupefying drugs.

35. *And they crucified Him.* They nailed Him to the cross. The cross was made of two pieces of wood, placed one across the other, in the shape which is familiar to every Christian eye. The hands of the victim were nailed or tied to the transverse beam, and the feet crossed on each other and nailed to their place. After the victim was secured, the cross was lifted and fixed in an upright position in the earth. It was then left under the charge of a guard, until death coming on slowly by the most fearful and indescribable agonies of tetanus and nervous exhaustion, relieved the sufferer. Sometimes the agonies continued for days, and again they were of shorter duration. As the Jewish law forbade that a body should be left hanging on a tree longer than one day, it in effect prevented the Jews from using this punishment. Deut. xxi. 22, 23. The Romans commonly resorted to it. It was a horrible, lingering death, combining horrors of mind and body which words fail to describe. It was an ignominious punishment, reserved for slaves or the basest of criminals. But to the mind of a Jew, it carried also the terrors of a religious curse. Deut. xxi. 22, 23. But it is not well for us to analyse these sufferings one by one. The agonies, the shame, the horror and anguish of our Saviour's death no tongue can tell. Or could they be exactly told and weighed, we should then be no nearer the mystery which hangs over the cross; of *why and how those sufferings atoned for our sins*. The cross is now the great sacrament of the Christian religion. The pains and horrors of it are the outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace procured for us by Christ. We cannot sound the depths of His love and mercy, nor compass the wisdom of the Almighty, in this plan of salvation. In the closet meditate humbly the pains of that death as an example of patience and resignation to the will of God; a provocative to diligence and self-denial in the love of men. A true sense of it, and the medicine of it will come to us by constant prayer and a "crucifying of

parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

36 And sitting down they watched him there:

37 And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS

JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

38 Then were there [a]two thieves crucified with him: one on the right hand, and another on the left.

39 ¶ And they that passed by,

a Is. 53. 12.

ourselves to the world." When we suffer in mind or body, faith points us to the cross. As the Israelites, bitten of serpents, looked to the brazen serpent and were healed, so the Christian may escape the wounds of sin made by that old serpent, the devil, by faith in the cross. Numb. xxi. 8, 9; John iii. 14, 15. As Noah and his family were saved in the flood by an ark of wood, so does St. Peter assure us that the Christian family is to be saved by the means of the death and resurrection of Christ. 1 Peter iii. 21. And in like manner the whole Bible points us to this one centre, the cross. The Old Testament foreshadows it. The New contains and comments on it. It is better to believe and adore than seek to understand that which no mortal mind can begin to comprehend; the ineffable passion and death of our Lord and Saviour. ¶ *And parted His garments.* "Into four parts, to every soldier a part." John xix. 23. The clothes belonged to the executioners. The coat or upper garment of Jesus was without seam, woven throughout. The four soldiers were unwilling to tear it, and therefore cast lots for it. ¶ *That it might be fulfilled, &c.* See Ps. xxii. 18. The whole Psalm refers to our Lord under the sufferings of the cross, and with the fortieth and fiftieth is appointed for the morning service of Good Friday. It was now the third hour (Mark xv. 35), that is, nine o'clock in the morning. It was the hour of offering up the lamb in the daily sacrifice of the temple. This lamb, which since the time of Moses had never ceased to be offered daily while the Jews had a temple or a city, was a type of Christ, the true Lamb of God. 1 Cor. v. 6, 7.

36. *They watched Him there.* The soldiers who had crucified Him were made responsible for Him, until His death. They watched to prevent His friends from coming to steal away His body.

37. *His accusation.* The crime for which He had been condemned. It was usual to to do this, in all cases of crucifixion. It was painted or engraved in black letters on a white ground, and put over His head. This was done by the order of Pilate. To make it well known, and perhaps to insult the Jews, he caused it to be written in the three current languages of the time, Hebrew, Greek and Latin. There is a slight difference in the manner of recording the accusation. St. John gives us the full sentence—*Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews.* He was an eye-witness. The other Evangelists give us the sense of the superscription, which lay in the words—*King of the Jews.* It was on this accusation that Jesus had been condemned. No other crime had been brought against Him.

38. *Two thieves.* Robbers; with which Judea at that time abounded. Pilate not residing in Jerusalem, took advantage of his occasional visits there, to pass judgment on criminals whom he found condemned. These two may have been companions of Barabbas, and to him, perhaps, the middle place belonged. The design was to insult the Saviour and the nation, by making Him appear as the companion of such wretches. But they fulfilled a prophecy of Isaiah, which says, "He was numbered with the transgressors." Is. liii. 12. They also gave Jesus the opportunity to show the majesty of His abounding grace, which could rescue a convert in the very jaws of death, to be the first fruits of His death.

39. *Reviled Him.* The Eastern people

reviled[a] him, wagging their heads,

40 And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, save thyself.[b] If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.

41 Likewise also the chief priests mocking *him*, with the scribes and elders, said,

42 He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.

43 [c]He trusted in God: let him deliver him now if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.

44 The thieves also which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.

a Ps. 22. 7; 109. 25. *b* Ch. 26. 63. *c* Ps. 22. 8.

indulge in these tokens of derision, and feel them much more than we of the West. They insult Him in these outward expressions, common to all the nations of antiquity. Job. xvi. 4; Ps. cix. 15; xxii. 7.

40. *Thou that destroyest the temple, &c.* "Thou that madest the pretence of being able to destroy the temple and rebuild it in so short time, show us some of that power in rescuing Thyself from the cross. How little does this look like it! Thou canst not save Thyself, but art pitifully given up to the vengeance of the laws." We are apt to think of those revilers, as if they believed and knew all that we now do. Not believing Jesus to be the Messiah, they thought that His death was a certain proof that He was an impostor. Many of those who reviled Jesus, were bad men; but some probably, in all honesty, thought they were doing God service, and afterwards like the thief, or Saul of Tarsus, repented and believed. It was the suspicion and derision of the good which was hardest to be borne.

42, 43. *He saved others, &c.* He may have saved others, for these men could not deny but that He had seemed, at least, to do so; but they taunted Him with His inability to save Himself. We wonder at this savage joy in the Jewish rulers, but it is easily explained, if we bear in mind that they were afraid of Jesus till now. They were doubtless amazed at their own success. ¶ *If He be the King of Israel, &c.* As His title written over His head declares. Jesus did no miracle, in all His course, on such a motive as this. The same proposition was made Him by Satan at the first. See ch. iv. 3, 6. The Christian should not act on the suggestion of evil men, as if his faith were at all doubtful. The Jews reviled Jesus for claiming to be pious and merciful. They showed themselves to be the opposite. They prove, as unwilling witnesses, that no crime *could* be brought against Jesus, or they would not have forgotten to urge it then.

44. *The thieves also.* At first both did this. But one of them afterwards repented. There is no contradiction in the two accounts. The Gospels were meant to be a revelation *as a whole*, and depend in amicable affiance upon each other. This example gives us hope in a late repentance, if sincere. But three things must be remembered to abolish a presumption, as dangerous as it is ill-grounded. 1. The thief is *only one instance* in all the cases mentioned in Scripture. "He was one, that we should not despair: and *only one*, that we should not presume." 2. The thief had had *no other opportunity* or invitation to obey Christ. How then can they who have been called from their youth up, pretend to claim shelter under his example? 3. The circumstances were peculiar. Jesus was in the act of dying, scorned and derided by His enemies. Yet in the moment of His greatest destitution, He conquers Satan, seizes a soul out of his grasp, and, by the glorious wonder of faith, saves it for ever! ¶ *Cast the same in His teeth.* Reviled Him with the same insulting

45 Now from the sixth [a]hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.

46 And about the ninth hour Jesus [b]cried with a loud voice, saying,[c] Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

47 Some of them that stood there, when they heard *that*, said, This *man* calleth for Elias.

48 And straightway one of

a Amos 8. 9. *b* Heb. 5. 7. *c* Ps. 22. 1.

speeches. Even such robbers, punished for their crimes, could find something to excite their hatred, in *an unsuccessful claim* to the Messiahship.

45. *Now from the sixth hour.* From twelve o'clock noon, till three afternoon. The Jews divided the daylight into twelve parts. ¶ *There was darkness.* It could not have been an eclipse of the sun, for the moon was then *full*, and of course in the opposite part of the heavens. The causes of it we cannot assign. The vapors and black clouds which precede an earthquake, may seem sufficient; for even in supernatural coincidences God chooses to work by a succession of natural causes. It is sufficient to the devout mind, to believe that *the* one great cause was the death of Jesus. If the rationalist chooses to dwell only on the secondary causes, we cannot prevent him. God has allowed him the power to do so. We believe that the darkness was supernatural, as much as the returning to life of the bodies of those who had died. Verse 52. He who had created all things, and by whom they consist, was then suffering in His mysterious nature. And as if an outward frame and body to Him, all nature darkens, quivers, and rends in agony. A Roman writer is supposed to mention it as a most remarkable darkness, so great that the stars appeared. ¶ *Over all the land.* Over the land or region round about Jerusalem. It may have extended over Judea, or further, but the object of the Evangelist is to tell us that this gloomy cloud hid the sun from shining where the cross was. As Moses stretched out his hands, and there was darkness over all the land of Egypt for three days, so now when Jesus stretches out His hands upon the cross, thick darkness comes down over the land for the space of three hours.

46. *About the ninth hour.* Three o'clock, P. M., when the lamb of the daily evening sacrifice was offered in the temple. See also Mark xv. 34–41; Luke xxiii. 45–49; John xix. 28–37. ¶ *Eli, Eli, &c.* Our Saviour uses the language of the 22d Psalm, but in the Syro-Chaldaic tongue which was spoken at the time. He shows by this use of the Old Testament, that He pays reverence to God, even in the agonies of death. These words are a cry of intense suffering. He was deserted by God, *only* as He was given up to suffer and to be persecuted by enemies. If we compare His glory with this hour of His ignominy, we will gather some conception of the manner in which He was deserted. We may not wonder at these words, seeing Him "in the form of a servant," and upon a cross. But we may not explain that which we cannot fathom. Says St. Leo: "The Passion of Christ contains a sacrament of our salvation." St. Hillary also calls it the "sacrament of the Lord's Passion." We see the outward marks and signs of suffering, but *believe* in the invisible work of sacrifice. Thus the central, grand doctrine of the cross gathers the sacraments to itself; and the habitual use of, and devout education of men by the sacraments, have alone been able to preserve inviolate the true faith of the salvation furnished by the cross of Christ. Let us not by a useless curiosity seek to pierce that darkness, but rather kneel down and worship, with devout thanks for the blessing of salvation.

47. *This man calleth for Elias.* The mistake may easily have been made by some one sitting near, as the words resembled the sound of the name of Elias in Hebrew. It would hardly seem to have been in mockery. They were

them ran, and took a sponge,[a] and filled *it* with vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink.

49 The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him.

50 ¶ Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

51 And behold, the vail[b] of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom: and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

52 And the graves were open-

a Ps. 69. 21.

b Ex. 26. 31; 2 Chron. 3. 14.

now awed by the supernatural darkness. The boldness which had prompted them to taunt the Saviour had vanished, and hearing Him call out, they may have expected in terror that the fiery prophet would descend in the chariot of fire to carry Him away. It is possible, however, that these words were meant as a taunt, by some hardened unbeliever, whose impudence, the very gloom which veiled the sun, could not daunt.

48. *One of them ran, &c.* This was done in kindness, and seems to show that His enemies had quailed before the darkness. He had said also, "I thirst," whereupon some one ran to relieve it. Some one filled a sponge with sour wine or vinegar, such as the soldiers used, and putting it upon a reed of hyssop, so as to reach His lips, as He hung on the cross, gave it to Him to quench the dreadful feverish thirst which He endured. St. John says there was set a "vessel filled with vinegar." It was for the use of the soldiers. It was probably not so sour and strong as what now goes by that name, but probably flat, acid wine. It was not able to stupefy Him and shorten life. Therefore when it was presented to Him, our Lord drank of it.

50. *Cried again with a loud voice.* He uttered the words, "It is finished" (John xix. 30), and then, "Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit." Luke xxiii. 46. His work, His agony was done. His humiliation, the work of Redemption, the types and prophecies, the imperfect covenant of the Mosaic law, the faith and patience of the saints, the great power of sin and Satan, the curse lifted—all were finished. The New Covenant was complete, perfected, sealed, ratified, *that all who believe in Him should be saved by holy faith.*

> 'Tis finished—Heaven is reconciled,
> And all the powers of darkness spoiled;
> Peace, love and happiness again
> Return and dwell with sinful men!
> Hymn 66.

¶ *Yielded up the ghost.* Saxon, gast or goost, the spirit, the incorporeal substance of the soul. This word is now used mostly as the title of the third Person of the Trinity. The soul of Jesus was not taken from Him by necessity as our lives are. John x. 18. He died for the sins of men. His spirit was that day in Paradise (Luke xxiii. 43), the place of departed spirits, which the Creed expresses by saying, "He descended into Hell," that is, Hades, the place of departed spirits. Ps. xvi. 10; Acts ii. 27. St. Peter says that, "He went and preached to the spirits in prison." 1 Pet. iii. 9. They were the saints who, St. Paul says, are waiting their final consummation and bliss. Heb. xi. 39, 40; Acts ii. 34.

51. *The veil of the temple was rent.* The veil was the covering of rich tapestry, made according to Ex. xxvi. 31–33. It divided the temple into two parts, hiding the Holy of Holies. It was rent by the tempest and concussion of the earthquake. This signified the breaking down of the partition wall between Jew and Gentile, and the opening the way for all men into the innermost recesses of the true temple. Also it signified the opening of those heavenly regions, that the Holy Ghost should come down to bless men: and finally, it showed the desertion of the temple by the Spirit, and the end of the Jewish covenant. ¶ *In twain.* Into two pieces. About this time of the

ed, and many bodies of the saints which slept, arose,

53 And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

54 Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.

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day the priest was burning incense before the Holy of Holies, and must have witnessed it. ¶ *The earth did quake.* An earthquake is a violent quaking or concussion of the earth, accompanied by fearful rending of it in various places, and tempestuous winds in the air. This earthquake is thought to be mentioned by Roman writers. The rocks were rent by the concussion. The traveller is shown by the monks of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the relics of this catastrophe. Among others, the rock rent between the spot of the Saviour's cross and that of the impenitent thief upon the left, as if he had been separated by the elements from the Saviour. The rending of the rocks opened the tombs of certain of the saints, whose bodies rose again to this mortal life, just as the bodies of Lazarus and Jairus' daughter had before done.

52. *And the graves were opened.* Graves were generally made in the faces of the hills which surrounded the city, being cut into the rock. They were in many cases laid bare at this time. ¶ *And many bodies of the saints, &c.* This they did after the resurrection of Jesus. They did not rise in the same body in which Jesus rose. He rose in glory and incorruption, a spiritual body, which dieth no more. But they were probably saints lately dead, and well known to the Jews. They died again and are now waiting the true resurrection of the last day. 1 Cor. xv. ¶ *Which slept.* Which had died. Scripture often uses this gentle picture of death. Deut. xxxi. 16; John xi. 11.

53. *And appeared unto many.* These dead persons, who were recalled to life, may have been disciples and friends of Jesus. In His risen body our Saviour appeared only to the disciples. These risen saints were therefore subsidiary proofs to the Jews of the truth of the resurrection. For however they might refuse to believe it on the testimony of the living, they could not well refuse the evidence of those who had been dead, and were recalled by the rising of the Lord Jesus. After they had performed their especial mission to bear witness to this great truth, they, one after the other, slept again. ¶ *The holy city,* Jerusalem. It was so called because it was the place of the holy temple where God had dwelt, and to distinguish it from all places in which idols were worshipped.

54. *Now when the centurion.* He was a Roman officer over a hundred soldiers. His duty, on this occasion, was to watch the bodies of the crucified until they were entirely dead. Tradition says that the rent in the rocks began near the cross and extended to the spot where he was standing. ¶ *They who were with Him.* His band, or a large part of it. It manifests the fear of the Jews, that they took this pains to *watch Jesus.* A few soldiers had sufficed for the others. But they sent a centurion lest the disciples or multitudes might rescue Him from the cross. ¶ *They feared greatly.* Their own ideas of religion as heathens, would fill them with alarm lest the Being thus mourned over by nature, might suddenly destroy them all. ¶ *Truly this was the Son of God.* There were many of them, and many exclamations. St. Luke records that the centurion glorified God and said, "Certainly this was a righteous man." The language seems to intimate that he had some knowledge of the true God. The words which St. Matthew here records, were used by others of the band as well as the centurion. We have in this man a disinterested witness to the

55 And many women were there (beholding afar off) which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him:

56 Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children.

57 ¶ When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple:

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divine character of our Lord, which is invaluable. He was a plain man, a soldier and a heathen. He had no prejudices to mislead him, but, forced by the wonders which he saw, gave his unsolicited testimony to the divinity of the Sufferer.

55. *Many women.* This company of women, of which frequent mention is made, were female relatives of the disciples, or themselves disciples of Jesus. Luke xxii. 49; John xix. 25. Their sex protected them from the dangers to which men might have been exposed. It also prevented them from drawing near. A few only with the Virgin Mother stood near the cross. They remained "last at the cross," with the disciple St. John, to aid him in offering the last ministrations to the Saviour. It was fit, too, that the sex, which had originally led the way to our common misery, should follow to the last the One, who had taken flesh of them to expiate our common sin.

56. *Mary Magdalene.* Mary of Magdala, a small town, near the Sea of Galilee, now called El Medjde. See Matt. ch. xv. 39; Mark xvi. 9. ¶ *Mary the mother of James and Joses.* The wife of Cleophas, mentioned by St. John (xix. 25) as *with* the Virgin Mary. This settles the fact that she, and not the Virgin, was the mother of the disciples, called the *brethren* of our Lord. The James mentioned was James called the Less, to distinguish him from the son of Zebedee. ¶ *The mother of Zebedee's children.* Salome. Mark xv. 40. This day, which in its great event is now closed, is, and always has been celebrated by the Holy Church throughout all the world. It is called *Good Friday*, because that it saw the solemn ratification of that covenant of grace, by which alone all good comes to us sinners. It is to be observed by strict fasting and humble penitential abasement and prayer. We must seek the humble mind of Jesus, that our sins may be repented of by us, as they were expiated by Him. The lessons and Psalms of the day, with the solemn hymns appointed (Hymns 61–67) ought to be read in connection with this chapter. The Christian should abstain from all labor and worldly care, and hallow the day,—a day beyond all others filled with tender and holy associations.

57–60. *When the even was come.* About five in the afternoon, before the sun set. The Sabbath began at sunset, when labor was forbidden, and when it was unlawful for the bodies to remain on the cross. See also Mark xv. 42–46; Luke xxiii. 50–53; John xix. 38–42. Before this the Jews, scrupulous about the bodies hanging upon the crosses (Deut. xxi. 23), begged Pilate to order their mutilation, in order that death might be hastened. The soldiers examined the bodies, and after breaking the legs of the two thieves, who were yet alive, were astonished to find Jesus already dead. One of them, in idle curiosity, pierced his side with a spear, fulfilling prophecy, and proving the certainty of His death. John xix. 31–37. ¶ *Came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph.* He came to the cross, and finding Jesus dead, went into the city to Pilate. Arimathea was the Ramathaim-zophim of the Old Testament, the birthplace of Samuel. 1 Sam. i. 19. Joseph was a pious man, and highly spoken of by the Evangelists. He was "an honorable counsellor" (Mark xv. 43), and "waited for the kingdom of God," i. e. the coming of the Messiah. He was a "good man and a just," and opposed the wickedness of his fellow-councillors (Luke xxiii. 51), and was,

58 He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered.

59 And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,

60 And laid it in his own [a]new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

61 And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.

SATURDAY.

62 ¶ Now the next day that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,

63 Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he

[a] Is. 53. 9.

with an allowed prudence, a disciple of Jesus. John xix. 38.

58. *He went to Pilate.* He dared not remove the body of Jesus without permission. He knew the feelings of all parties, and was probably a man entitled to the respect of the governor. It was usual to leave the bodies of those who were crucified to decay in the places where they died.

59. *He wrapped it in a clean linen cloth.* The body of a dead person was rolled in swaths of linen. Nicodemus joined him, and brought with him servants bearing "a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pounds weight." John xix. 39. They adopted "the manner of the Jews to bury," but as there was little time left before the Sabbath (Saturday) they did it hastily, intending to supply the other rites on the following Sunday. For they returned from the sepulchre and made preparations to that effect. Luke xxiii. 56; xxiv. 1.

60. *In his own new tomb, hewn out of a rock.* This tomb stood in a garden or enclosed place, and was very near the spot of the crucifixion. It was a new sepulchre. And judging by the size of the spot now marked as the sepulchre, it had room for only a single body. It had two portions, an outer chamber or vault, and an inner, which was narrow and smaller, where the body lay. There could be no mistake in regard to His resurrection. It was a solid rock, a new tomb without other bodies, and sealed and guarded by soldiers. It was impossible to remove the body either by violence or deception. Thus was fulfilled the prophecy, which seemed so strange that it should be spoken of one "numbered with transgressors" (Is. liii. 9), that "He should make his grave with the rich." A magnificent church covers the spot at this day. There seems little doubt, and no reason to doubt, that the sacred spot has been identified by the loving piety of past ages.

61. *Sitting over against the sepulchre.* This they did to mark the spot, and to vent their grief. They remained probably till sunset. The Evangelist mentions it as a reason, why the women should have gone alone, and been first to visit the tomb.

62. SATURDAY, THE SABBATH. *Now the next day, &c.* Friday, the sixth day of the week, was called the day of preparation; as all labor for the seventh was to be done then. Ex. xvi. 22. This year it was the Passover. The next day after it was the Sabbath, called by St. John "an high day." xix. 31. The Pharisees went to Pilate some time during the day to make their request. Their principles forbade them doing any labor whatever, such as setting the watch and sealing the stone, until Saturday after sunset. We may suppose that they obtained consent on Saturday, and after the Sabbath closed, they examined the tomb to see that the body was safe, and sealed it.

63. *We remember, &c.* They had heard Him say it, or at least heard that such had been said. Do they not betray here a consciousness that they were

was yet alive, [a]After three days I will rise again.

64 Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.

65 Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make *it* as sure as ye can.

66 So they went and made the sepulchre sure, [b]sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

[a] Ch. 16. 21; 17. 23; 20. 19; 26. 61. [b] Dan. 6. 17.

deceivers, and had all along understood correctly what Jesus said: "Destroy this temple (His body) and after three days I will raise it up?" ¶ *That deceiver.* That pretender to the Messiahship. They thought themselves now sure that He was an impostor, and had deceived the people, since they had no notion that the Messiah could die on the cross.

64. *The last error shall be worse than the first.* They were shrewd in their malice. That which they called an error was beyond their control after the resurrection. They could no longer conspire against Jesus, nor stop the spread of the faith.

65. *Pilate said unto them.* He refused to be made any longer a party to their schemes, or to take the responsibility of guarding the tomb. It was no longer in his jurisdiction. A danger to the Jewish religion, he, as a heathen, made light of. He orders them, therefore, to do as they pleased in it; that he would interfere no longer. Had a heathen governor guarded the tomb, the Jews might have pretended that he had permitted the disciples to steal the body; but being themselves the guardians of it, they have no escape.

66. *Sealing the stone.* The sepulchre was shut by a great stone rolled against the mouth of it. The Pharisees made it sure by affixing their seals. They did it in such a way as to be certain of no collusion between the soldiers and the disciples. It was not uncommon to adopt such a precaution. See Dan. vi. 17. It was the seal of the priests, not of Pilate, which was affixed to the tomb. ¶ *Setting a watch.* A guard of soldiers large enough to deter the disciples from attempting to obtain the body. "Observe," says St. Chrysostom, "how, against their will, they concert to demonstrate the truth, for by their precautions irrefragable demonstration of the resurrection was attained. The sepulchre was watched, and so no fraud could have been practised; and if there was no collusion, it is certain that the Lord rose again. Pilate will not suffer that the soldiers alone should seal. But as though he had learnt the truth concerning Christ, he was no longer willing to be partner in their acts, and says, Seal it as ye will yourselves, that ye may not be able to accuse others. For, had the soldiers alone sealed, they might have said that the soldiers had suffered the disciples to steal the body, and so given the disciples a handle to have forged the tale concerning the resurrection: but they could not say this now, when they themselves had sealed the sepulchre."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1. *In the end of the Sabbath,* or after the Sabbath was ended, Saturday evening, Mary Magdalene and two others provided sweet spices, that they might be ready to go next morning and embalm the body of Jesus. Mark xvi. 1. And St. Matthew takes up his narrative with that coming of the women to the sepulchre. It was "very early, being yet dark;" somewhere about three o'clock, A. M., that the two Marys and Salome left their dwelling. ¶ *As it began to dawn.* There is great necessity of discriminating carefully in the accounts given by the four Evangelists. St. Matthew and St. John begin to speak of the same time. See John xx. 1. All the Evangelists then describe such events as have struck them, not

CHAPTER XXVIII.

EASTER SUNDAY, MARCH 28TH.

IN the end[a] of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first *day* of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the [b]other Mary to see the sepulchre.

a Mark 16. 1; Lu. 24. 1; John 20. 1.

2 And behold, there [‖]was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

3 [c]His countenance was like

b Ch. 27. 56. ‖ Or, *had been.* *c* Dan. 10. 6; Rev. 1. 14, 16.

regarding the exact order of them, and by no means contradicting the others. On account of this fact a harmony of the passages is annexed. ¶ *The first day of the week.* In Greek, the first of the Sabbaths. This first day of the week which we now call *Sunday*, or *the Lord's day*, was the day when the first fruits were offered in the temple (Lev. xxiii. 10), from which seven Sabbaths were counted to the feast of Pentecost. On this day Jesus rose from the dead, *the first fruits* of them that slept, the earnest and surety of the resurrection of all who sleep in Him. Rom. xi. 16; 1 Cor. xv. 20, 23. The fourth commandment bids us Remember the Sabbath day, or day of Rest. The letter of the law requires rest on the seventh day; the spirit of it is satisfied with the observance of one day in seven. Who, then, changed the day? It is believed that the Apostles themselves did so, observing the Lord's day from the first, and doubtless by our Lord's command. Ignatius, the first of the Fathers of the Church, exhorted Christians not to keep their day of rest with the Jews, but to live according to the Lord's day. Pliny, a heathen writer, reports, that the "Christians used to meet upon a set day before it was light." This, Christian writers agree, was the Lord's day. The day of the Resurrection is called *Easter day*, from the old Saxon word *öster*, to rise. It has been observed by the Church in all ages and countries. ¶ *Came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary.* See notes, ch. xxvii. 56. The other Mary was the mother of James and Joses. (Mark.) Salome attended them. The other company, of which St. Luke makes mention, *started afterwards.* Being in greater numbers, they collected more slowly. It does not appear that any of them could have expected to enter the sepulchre until the guard set by the Jewish rulers was withdrawn. As the first company set out the earthquake occurred. They hastened on to see the sepulchre. ¶ *To see the sepulchre.* It was their intention also to embalm the body. But they may have had a vague expectation, that something unusual would occur, though they knew not what. They must have remembered the sayings of Jesus in regard to the lying in the grave three days. It was affection mourning over the dead, rather than faith in a living Saviour, which brought them so early to the sepulchre.

2. *And, behold, there was a great earthquake.* Or there had been. There was an earthquake while they were on the way, the effects of which they saw when they arrived at the grave. The earthquake was a fitting sign to accompany the rising of the Lord. He rose by *force* and power. He *could not* be holden of death. Besides this, Jesus did not suffer the eyes of the profane to look upon Him after His rising from the dead. Therefore He rises with tremendous powers and angelic witnesses, in order to convince the Jews that His body had not been stolen away. ¶ *The angel of the Lord.* Rather an angel. ¶ *Sat upon it.* This He seemed to do to the eyes of the soldiers. Sitting was a significant sign of majesty. The angel sat, terrible to the keepers. See Matt. xxvi. 64, and Acts vii. 55. He rose and was standing, to comfort the women as they came. And when Mary drew near, she saw, what had been un-

lightning, and his raiment white as snow.

4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead *men*.

5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

6 He is not here: for he is ris-

noticed before, a second angel within the tomb.

3. *His countenance.* His whole figure and appearance. We now use it as meaning the face, but originally it meant (con-teneo) the whole visible substance. The Greek signifies the same, "that which was seen" of him. His visible appearance. Judges xiii. 6. ¶ *Like lightning.* Surpassingly dazzling, and flashing with terrible beauty in the eyes of the keepers, like the vividness and blaze of lightning. As angelic appearances seem to be assumed at will, we may suppose them to have the properties of the most brilliant elements, modifying and changing at pleasure. Otherwise the same fear would have terrified the women. But when they drew near, they saw them only in mild, comforting, subdued light, as "a young man clothed in a long white garment" (Mark), or as "two men in shining garments" (Luke), or as "two angels in white" (John). Similar changes happened to the risen body of Jesus. Mark xvi. 12; Luke xxiv. 16, 31; John xx. 14. xxi. 7. And such powers seem promised to the spiritual bodies of the saints. 1. Cor. xv. 44, 48. A spiritual body will sympathize in every strong emotion of pleasure or praise which wells up from the soul. ¶ *His raiment white as snow.* White being naturally associated in our minds with purity, innocence, and joy, is a fit emblem of the angels. Says an ancient writer: "What means this raiment when there is no need of a covering? The angel figures our dress, our shape, our likeness in the resurrection, when man is sufficiently clothed by the splendor of his own body. This angel confounds the wicked, and comforts the good."

4. *They became as dead men.* They swooned away. This appearance of the angel might well terrify the heathen soldiers. Their mythology would prompt them to imagine that the gods had come down to punish them for their impious deed. The Saviour rose, therefore, unseen, while they were lying prostrate around the garden in front of the tomb. After a time they recover, and flee into the city, to bear news of this miracle. They had been set there to keep a few men from a theft. They report a portentous deliverance, against which they had no power to contend.

5. There is a pause between the fourth and fifth verses. For from some cause unknown, the women did not reach the sepulchre until about six o'clock, when the sun was rising. Mark xvi. 2. If they had remained in the city, whither they had gone to procure spices, some on Friday (Luke xxiii. 54–56), some on Saturday evening (Mark xvi. 1), they may not have been able to pass the gates. They perceived, as they came in sight of the garden, that the stone was rolled back. Mary Magdalene, thinking that the Lord's body had been treated with some indignity, returns in an agony of grief to inform Peter and John. Mark xvi. 3, 4. After she was gone, the other two women entered the outer chamber of the tomb, and there saw an angel sitting on the right of the entrance into the inner chamber, where the body had been laid. This second angel speaks to them, that is, to Mary wife of Cleophas, and Salome. Comp. Mark xvi. 5–8. The vision of two angels described by St. Luke (xxiv. 1–9), was seen by the second company of women, who had left the cross on Friday evening, to return to the city. It is easy to exaggerate difficulties and raise objections, and God seems by his providence to have left room, in our ignorance of certain parts of the Gospel narrative, and es-

en,[a] as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.

7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead, and behold,[b] he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.

8 And they departed quickly

[a] Ch. 12. 40. 16. 21; 17. 23; 29. 19.

[b] Ch. 20. 19; Mark 14. 7.

pecially in this, for those who will not see, to veil their blindness under specious pleas of reasoning. But the devout Christian, who desires to see the truth, will find all these difficulties smoothed by a diligent study of the Gospel in an humble spirit. The slight discrepancies of style, he would no more remove, than he would level the hills, and straiten the banks of a winding river in the natural world, in a vain hope to improve the works of God. These things are all marks of *naturalness*, and incentives to diligence. ¶ *Fear not ye.* A usual salutation of celestial beings, even from the days of Abraham. Gen. xv. 1; Judges vi. 23. They were alarmed at the appearance of the angel, though now veiled under the form of a young man. The human heart instinctively trembles at any sudden appearance of spiritual beings. Job iv. 13–16; Matt. xiv. 26.

6. *He is risen, as He said.* As none of them had as yet understood what rising from the dead should mean (Mark ix. 10), they did not expect the event. At the same time they must have felt vague hopes of some unusual appearance of Jesus on finding the body gone. ¶ *The place where the Lord lay.* The angel speaks of the Saviour by that title of His Majesty by which He is proved in the fact of the resurrection to be Lord over all. 1 Cor. xv. 27, 28. By this He is commonly called in the epistles, and by the same we hail Him in all the services of the Church. The spot where Jesus was laid is affectionately pointed out by the angel to the women. Shall we hesitate to express the holy bond, which this law of all beings, spiritual as well as rational, has upon us? A skeptical indifference is now current which disregards the sacred associations of the life of Jesus. The guides who conduct travellers through the Church of the Holy Sepulchre on Mount Calvary, never expect a *Frank*, i. e. a European or American, to kneel down in prayer in any sacred spot of that august temple. The spot now pointed out as the sepulchre where Jesus was laid, is at least a correct image of the original tomb. "It is (see Williams' Holy City) a four-sided chamber, nearly square, six feet eight inches long, and six feet one inch in width. Its vault is eight feet six inches from the floor. More than half of this chamber on the north side is occupied by a kind of altar or pedestal, two feet ten inches in height, which covers and protects the real sepulchral couch where the body of our Lord was laid. The entrance to the chamber is on the east, and close to the side of the altar. This chamber is asserted to be hewn out of the rock, but its surface is so covered with ornamental decorations, and blackened with the smoke of the lamps which are continually kept burning within, that no part of the rocky surface is visible." Thousands of pilgrims visit this sacred spot each year, to see and kneel in the place where the Lord lay. ¶ *Tell His disciples.* St. Mark adds, *tell Peter.* It was a mark of forgiveness to that Apostle, who was then sorrowing over his sin. The disciples were despairing. As a woman had led man to sin, so women now bring them the news of salvation. "Happy woman! who merited to announce to the world the triumph of the Resurrection! More happy souls, who in the day of judgment, when the reprobate are smitten with terror, shall have merited to enter the joy of the blessed resurrection!"—*Venerable Bede.* ¶ *Into Galilee.* There they had lived together; there most of His miracles had been wrought; and there were the greatest number of His disciples. 1 Cor. xv. 6.

8. *And they departed quickly.* They hastened to communicate the glad news to the disciples. ¶ *With fear and great*

from the sepulchre, with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.

9 ¶ And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, [a]Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came, and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.

10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my [b]brethren, that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

a Mark 16. 9; John 20. 14.

b John 20. 17; Heb. 2. 11.

joy. There is a fear which is easily, nay, naturally felt with love and joy. It prepares the mind for them, and exalts and purifies them. "In Thy fear," said David, "will I worship toward Thy temple." Ps. v. 7. And he speaks of himself "as devoted to Thy fear" (Ps. lxix. 38), and describes the wicked as having "no fear of God before their eyes." Ps. xxxvi. 1. Keble has beautifully paraphrased these words:—

"But when, in gentle spirits, fear
And joy so duly meet,
These sure have seen the angels near,
And kissed the Saviour's feet,"

¶ *And did run.* Knowing the joy which their message would convey, and urged perhaps by some fear of the angel. After their departure, Peter and John came running to the tomb, followed by Mary Magdalene. They examined the grave-clothes, but saw no vision, and soon left the sepulchre in utter amazement. Luke xxiv. 12; John xx. 3–10. Mary remained weeping, and as she stooped to look into the sepulchre, saw two angels who comforted her. As she turned, the Lord apeared to her, revealed Himself to her, and sent her on a message to His brethren. Mark xvi. 9; John xx. 11–17. She seems to have met or overtaken the other women, Mary, wife of Cleophas, and Salome, and our Lord appeared to the three.

9. *And as they went.* They were going to find the disciples. ¶ *All hail.* The Greek means simply, Hail, Rejoice, used in the same general sense as the English words, all hail. They knew Him by this salutation, and worshipped Him. ¶ *Held Him by the feet.* A common mode of showing reverence. 2 Kings iv. 37. They embraced His feet in their hands or arms, to manifest their affection and joy at seeing Him again, and their reverence at His now supernatural presence. See ch. xv. 25. On this and other occasions Jesus permitted persons to worship Him, which He surely would not have done had He been only man. St. Peter refused it. Acts x. 25. Thus "the fellow servant," in Rev. xxii. 9. Supreme worship is due to Christ. And if so, He is God, whom we worship, since to worship any creature is idolatry. Ch. iv. 10. The Prayer Book, in obedience to sound Scripture doctrine, bids us worship Christ: "O God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners." And again: "O Holy Jesus, who hast purchased to Thyself a universal Church;" and in the same prayer we address Him, "O Lord, our strength and our Redeemer."

10. *Be not afraid.* All are easily terrified by that which is unexpected and supernatural. These first Christians walked among miracles and felt awed by them. Moreover, they may have now feared lest it would be wrong for them to look upon the risen Lord, lest harm should happen to them. The Jews were exceeding tender on this matter. See Luke v. 8; Judges vi. 22, 23; xiii. 21, 22. Jesus comforts them and gives them a message to *His brethren.* He was not ashamed to call them brethren. Heb. ii. 11. Says St. Jerome: "This may be always observed both in the Old and New Testaments, that when there is an appearance of any majestic person, the first thing done is to banish fear, that the mind being tranquillized may receive the things that are said." ¶ *Into Galilee.* There He met with them by the lake of Tiberias. John xxi. 1–14. Afterwards He appeared to "about five hundred brethren at once" (1 Cor. xv. 6), as is thought, on the Mount of Transfiguration, and a third time in Galilee, to

11 ¶ Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done.

12 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers,

13 Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him *away* while we slept.

James and all the Apostles. 1 Cor. xv. 7.

11. *Now when they were going.* The women go and repeat these words to the disciples, but are hardly believed. Their words seemed like idle dreams. See Mark xvi. 10, 11; Luke xxiv. 10, 11: John xx. 18. In the mean time the soldiers returned to the city, and a part of them related to the Jewish rulers what had befallen. They being heathen men, were more ready to admit the resurrection, and perhaps would have carried their report also to Pilate. For though it was death to a Roman soldier to be unfaithful on his post, when only men were opposed to him, it is altogether likely, that with the signs of the earthquake to sustain their tale, they would have found Pilate willing to believe them. The chief priests believed them, or they would have searched for the body at once, and denounced the guard to the governor. ¶ *Chief priests.* Annas and Caiaphas, and the most important of the priestly order.

12. *And when they were assembled with the elders.* The whole Sanhedrim was convened to consult on what should be done to meet this alarming difficulty. The tale of the soldiers was to be silenced at once. And they were in a strait, how to prevent its circulation among all the people. They had said before, "If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe on Him." John xi. 48. When they begged the guard of Pilate, to prevent the disciples from stealing the body, and pretending that it was risen, they said, "And the last error will be worse than the first." Ch. xxvii. 64. But now the body is gone,—the relics of a Divine interposition remaining, every thing tallying with the story of the soldiers. Why did they not first seek the spot, and endeavor to trace the perpetrators of the deed? They evidently believed the soldiers, believed that it had come true, in some supernatural manner, that Jesus had broken out from the grave, as He had before rescued Lazarus. Hypocrites to the last, we take leave of them in this Gospel, as buying a falsehood, and preferring a weak lie to the truth. The writer has drawn their characters with consistency from first to last. ¶ *Large money.* A large amount of money. They were obliged to offer a great bribe, for it would have been dangerous to the soldiers to have their story heard in certain quarters.

14. *The governor's ears.* To the knowledge of Pilate. He would soon leave Jerusalem for Cæsarea again, and forget that such a guard had been set. And unless the chief priests had complained of the soldiers, they could have denied the whole story. And again, the Roman governor despised the Jews, and would not easily have listened to accusations against any of his own nation from Jews. On these accounts it became safe for the soldiers to commit this act. Had Pilate truly believed that any of his soldiers had slept upon guard, and suffered men to steal away a body which they had been set to watch, he would, according to the Roman laws, have put them to death without mercy.

15. *Saying, &c.* Their story was absurd. For it was an unheard of thing for a Roman guard to sleep on their post. If they were asleep, as they said, how did they know that the disciples had done it? Or granting that they only supposed so, how could the disciples have rolled away the stone, which was large and heavy, without awakening them? And if the disciples had wished to steal the body, why did they not do so on the evening of Friday, when there

14 And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.

15 So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

April.

16 ¶ Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

17 And when they saw him,

were no spectators? It was in their hands then, for they buried it. A bribe would have made any soldier left by chance, silent for ever. If the disciples had stolen it, they would never have stopped in the midst of a Roman guard, to strip it, and lay the clothes away in order. The body was covered with glutinous spices, which made the grave-clothes adhere. It would have been a work of time to remove them. Their story was improbable. They are unwilling witnesses to *one fact*, that the body was not in the grave. We turn to the disciples, and find abundant proofs that they were able and honest witnesses to the true story of its resurrection. But thus does God permit a false opinion to follow and mimic every truth, as if He would always suffer men to choose between the two. If the falsehood was allowed them, and yet our Lord did not reveal Himself to all the Jews to refute it, but only to those who loved Him, we must watch for the same duplicities now, and beware lest, being led by unbelief to choose the untrue doctrines of heresy and schism, we lose the knowledge of the truth.

15. *Among the Jews.* The Christians and Jews had separate interests at the time St. Matthew wrote. The latter were enraged at the spread of the Gospel, and struggled to put it down. ¶ *Until this day.* The day or time when this Gospel was written, which was not many years after the resurrection.

16. *Then the eleven disciples.* Judas was dead, and was no more numbered with them. This meeting was in *April.* Jesus had appeared the same day that He rose, to two disciples on the road to Emmaus, a village about seven and a half miles from Jerusalem. Mark xvi. 12, 13; Luke xxiv. 13–32. They immediately returned to Jerusalem, and all the disciples being assembled except Thomas, Jesus appeared and convinced them of His resurrection. Luke xxiv. 33–48. Thus ended the first Easter Sunday. March 28. On the following Sunday Jesus appeared to the eleven (Mark xvi. 14: John xx. 26–32), again at the sea of Tiberias, and then as St. Matthew here relates. ¶ *Into a mountain where Jesus had appointed.* See ch. xxvi. 32. As none of the Evangelists declare which mountain was appointed, it is impossible to decide it now. Tradition points out, with great consistency, Mount Tabor, on which Jesus had appeared in the form of His glory to the three disciples. Ch. xvii. 1. Upon that mountain He again appears to "above five hundred brethren at once." It gives us a goodly idea of the numbers ready to form the Church. After this event the eleven returned to Jerusalem. Jesus remained on earth, being seen at various times for forty days, teaching the Apostles how they were to organize and administer the government of the Church. Acts i. 3. And on the fortieth day (May 6, Thursday), He led them out to the Mount of Olives, and having blessed them, He ascended into heaven.

17. *But some doubted.* Among whom was Thomas, one of the eleven. They doubted at first, until they saw Him and were convinced. It was for the confirming the faith of the Church, that some were allowed to doubt. If they had adopted the belief with unnatural eagerness, we would now be in danger of doubt. But when they were hard to believe, and required evidence of the most satisfactory kind to establish the fact of the Resurrection, they established it on a basis of proof, which cannot be overthrown. The fact of the Resurrec-

they worshipped him: but some doubted.

MAY.

18 And Jesus came, and spake unto them, saying, [a]All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

[a] Dan. 7. 13, 14; Ch. 11. 27; 16. 28; Lu. 1. 32; 10. 22; John 3. 35; 5. 22; Acts 2. 36; Rom. 14. 9; Eph. 1. 10, 21; Heb. 1. 2; 2. 8.

tion was a strange one. It had no other like it. The daughter of Jairus, the widow's son, Lazarus and the saints, whose graves were opened by the earthquake on Good Friday, were only *revivified*, and recalled to this life. But Jesus rose to the incorruption, glory and power of an endless life, in "*a spiritual body.*" The rules which His body obeyed seemed unaccountable and mysterious. He partook of food and liquids, which a mere spirit could not do. He could be handled, as a spirit could not be. Luke xxiv. 39. But on the other hand, where did He dwell? He passed into rooms, whose doors were shut for fear of the Jews; appeared in a form unknown to two going to Emmaus; *in another form*, as St. Mark (ch. xvi. 12) calls it, His body ascended into the heavens, doubtless by its spiritual attractions toward the throne of God, but against the usual laws of natural bodies. It was not a body like ours, though sprung from the natural body, as St. Paul reasons. 1 Cor. xv. And in the first accounts of His risen body, it was beyond reason that all the Christians should credit it at once. The Holy Spirit was not yet given them. They had only natural reason to guide them. They were docile and willing, but very imperfect still. It was, therefore, no strange thing, but only a plain necessity that some would doubt. This does not, perhaps, excuse them entirely, but it explains their doubt. Jesus gradually, the Spirit at Pentecost, finally, removed their doubts. The RESURRECTION is a *vital doctrine* of Christianity. It is found in all the creeds: 1. In the fact that Christ "rose again from the dead, according to the Scriptures." 2. The belief in the resurrection of the bodies of all saints. "I look for the resurrection of the body, and the life of the world to come"—that is, the incorruptible life of that spiritual body. See *Article IV.* "Christ did truly rise again from death, and took again His body, with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith He ascended into heaven, and there sitteth, until He return to judge all men at the last day." The preaching of the clergy, the faith of Christians, the forgiveness of sins, the veracity of the Gospel, the hope of a life in heaven—all centre upon this fact and doctrine. 1 Cor. xv. 14, 17; Rom. iv. 25; i. 4; Acts i. 21, 22. So important a fact is grounded on the deductions of right reason, and the evidence offered to the natural mind. A continual witness and evidence to the fact and doctrine is found in the Church of Christ. 1 Tim. iii. 15, 16. The doctrine and testimony are proclaimed to all men by this continual *witness*. For she could not exist and work successfully, as she is doing in all the world, conquering enemies and blessing nations, except by the belief that Christ now lives and aids her. He proves His resurrection, by being with those whom He has commissioned to preach the Gospel, and whose commission He attests, by making men willing and obedient to the faith, and by their faith overcoming falsehood and sin. This great subject is annually held up to us, in the festival of *Easter*. The reader is referred to the Prayer Book for the services for Easter, and the Monday and Tuesday following. Naturally, therefore, after the narrative of the Resurrection, St. Matthew concludes with that which has witnessed it to all ages and nations of the world—THE MINISTERIAL COMMISSION.

18. *All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth.* Power to do all the work of mediation and grace between God and men. Our Lord, as He was the Son of God in His divine nature, had from eternity Almighty power. John i. 3; Coll. i. 16, 17; Heb. i. 8. And all power, in an absolute sense,

19 ¶ [a]Go ye therefore and [‖]teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;

a Is. 52. 10; Acts 2. 38; Col. 1. 23.

‖ Or, *make disciples*, or, *Christians of all nations.*

cannot be attributed to Him in His human nature, for it cannot be possessed and used by any creature. But He claims all power in His Person as Christ, both God and man. For after His obedience unto death, and His sacrifice on the Cross, He became the *Mediator*, the one authorized to stand between God and man. See *Article II.* "The two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and manhood, were joined together in *One Person*, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man." To this adorable Person was *all power* now committed, that He should be Prophet, Priest, King, Mediator, Intercessor, and Saviour of His people, and Judge over all created beings. John v. 22, 23; 1 Cor. xv. 25–27; Eph. i. 20–23; Phil. ii. 9–11. The corresponding passage of St. John (ch. xx. 21–23) reads, "As my Father hath sent Me, so send I you." Thus does He give them a commission founded upon His own, to do the work in its application to men in every age, which He began and made possible in His own Person.

19. *Go ye therefore.* Three things are given in this charge of the Lord Jesus. 1. *Teaching.* Under which are included all kinds of instruction fitting men for initiation in the Church here on earth. The word in Greek means, as the margin renders it, *making disciples.* 2. *Baptizing in the name of the Trinity.* This includes by consequence all sacramental means of uniting men to Christ. These are put into the hands of the ministry. It is unlawful and wrong that they should be done by any who have not a *clear Apostolic commission.* 3. *Teaching Christians in the Church all things whatsoever Christ hath commanded.* This includes all instruction and discipline in the Church. And *two* promises are made. 1. To be with *them*, that their power and authority over the Church should never cease, which power is still exercised by all Christians, obeying, 1st, the Apostolic writings or the New Testament, and 2d, the Apostolic traditions, such as are clearly proved by certain proofs of history. 2. *To be with ministers of the Apostolic succession* to the end of time. They claim this promise, whose commission is proved by "Scripture and ancient authors." "And to the intent that these orders may be continued and reverently used, and esteemed in this Church, no man shall be accounted or taken to be a lawful Bishop, Priest or Deacon in this Church, or suffered to execute any of the said functions, except he be called, tried, examined and admitted thereunto according to the form hereafter following, or hath had Episcopal Consecration or Ordination."—*Preface to Ordinal in Prayer Book.* In the prayers of the Office for the Institution of Ministers into parishes or Churches, there are two which plead the promises made to the "divers Orders" of "Ministers of the Apostolic succession." See Additional note. ¶ *Therefore.* Because all power is given to Me as Mediator and Head of the Church, go bear the blessed news to others, and in full faith in that power sustaining you, impart to men the gifts of grace. No man can claim the ministerial commission, but on this promise, and *Therefore.* For but two proofs are possible. One is perpetuity and succession from age to age. The other is miracles. St. Paul had not the former proof, but he had the latter. He worked miracles. Since miracles have ceased, the continual teaching of the Church is, that the other proof is absolutely necessary to the validity of a commission to preach and baptize. The Apostolic succession is claimed and valued by all who can trace their orders back to this promise to the Apostles. It is rejected by those who believe that their own wills or a majority of votes are alone sufficient to make them Ambassadors to their constituents. ¶ *Teach all nations.* Or make disciples of all nations. This

20 Teaching them to observe all things[a] whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

a Acts 2. 42.

includes all ages as well as all sexes. Children are a part of nations, as also are women. Though infants cannot be actually taught, they can be received into the number of disciples by baptism. See *Article XXVII.* ¶ *Baptizing them.* Administering to them who are taught to repent and believe the creeds and purpose a new life, the seal and means of forgiveness of sin and adoption into the Church, and all the gifts of grace necessary to salvation. See the exhortations in the Offices for Baptism, and *Article XXVII.* ¶ *In the name.* Into the faith and obedience of all things which are taught and commanded in Scripture by the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The *name* of God is frequently used as a brief form of expressing all His attributes and the religious worship which is due to them. Thus Ex. ix. 16; xx. 24. The names mentioned over the baptized are equally binding upon them, being, as Scripture shows, names of the Persons of the Trinity. It is to be noted that the Liturgy of the Church has grown out of these three names. The Creeds have three divisions, to teach the doctrines which the baptized must hold concerning each. The Gloria Patri is the form of worship to each. The Te Deum and other parts of the service have followed the same division. They teach us what doctrines have been held by the Church in past ages. This form of Baptism proves the equality of the Persons; the word *name* in the singular, the unity of nature between them. It is a sublime doctrine, which we now speak of by the word *Trinity*, but it must be reverently and devoutly studied. See the services and especially the Collect for Trinity Sunday. ¶ *Teaching them to observe.* The Lord Jesus remained with His disciples "forty days" after His resurrection, "speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" Acts i. 3. He now refers to these teachings, many of them not recorded, but acted on; and also those which are recorded. No man can cut off the New Testament from its *history*, that is, from the record of facts made by the early Christians. For he surely ignores and rejects all that kind of teaching, by which the Church was founded. He receives a partial view of the truth. Scripture contains all things necessary to salvation. May we, therefore, neglect every thing else, as useless, because not of vital necessity?

20. *Lo, I am with you alway.* By the power of a lawful commission, as they should act for Him, and by the graces of the Holy Ghost, attesting their work in saving men from sin and sanctifying them. This work proves the power and presence of the Lord Jesus to be with His ministers. The Apostles exhorted men in Christ's stead, and governed the Church in His name. They conferred spiritual gifts from Him. They, in a word, did His work, as His mystical Body in the world for this very purpose. ¶ *Unto the end of the world.* This extends the promise of His spiritual presence to His ministers of every age. The Apostles soon died. But before their death they ordained others to carry on the work. And Christians have obeyed them in every age in spiritual things; not doubting but that they had the lawful power to speak for Christ in things sacred. The spiritual presence of Christ is with His ministry. Our Saviour soon after this ascended into heaven. Ten days after the Holy Spirit descended in a baptism of fire, to regenerate the disciples. They at once saw, as by a flash of light, the whole plan of Redemption, at whose simplest elements they had been, in their natural state, stumbling and confounded. "By ascending into heaven," says St. Leo, "He does not desert His adopted, but from above strengthens to endurance those whom He invites upwards to glory. Of which glory may Christ make us par-

takers, who is the King of Glory, *God blessed for ever*, AMEN.

Note to verses 18–20, *from Bp. Beveridge.*

"These words were spoken to the Apostles and their successors only, as such; and, therefore, Christ's presence with them by His Holy Spirit here promised, cannot be understood only of His illuminating or sanctifying or comforting presence, which He vouchsafeth to all believers, as well as unto them; but it must be understood in such a sense as is proper to the Apostles, pastors or governors of the Church in all ages; which in brief amounts to no more nor less than this, even that Christ, having constituted such an office in His Church for the government and edification of it to the end of the world, He here promiseth that He Himself, by His Holy Spirit, will be always present at the execution of it, so as to make it effectual to the great ends and purposes for which it was designed. The Apostolical office hath been handed down from one to another ever since the Apostles' days to our time, and so will be to the end of the world, Christ Himself being continually present at such imposition of hands: thereby transferring the same Spirit which He had first breathed into His Apostles upon others successively after them, as really as He was present with the Apostles themselves, when He first breathed it into them. Insomuch that they who are thus ordained, are said to be made bishops by the Holy Ghost Himself. Acts xx. 28. By which means the Holy Catholic Church always hath been and still is truly *apostolical*, as it is called in the Nicene creed. And the several parts of the Apostolical office are now as effectually performed by their successors and others ordained under them as they were while the Apostles themselves lived. For it was not the persons of the Apostles, but their office, influenced and assisted by the Spirit of God, that made the sacraments they administered to be valid, and their preaching the Gospel so prevalent upon those that heard it. Though Paul himself planted and Apollos watered, it was God only that gave the increase. Christ, according to His promise, being always present by His Holy Spirit at the administration of the several offices which He has ordained in His Church, they can never fail of their designed effect, if the persons to whom they are administered be but rightly disposed and qualified for it. And since our Lord thus continually accompanies the Apostles and their successors, so as to vouchsafe His Spirit to those on whom they lay their hands, and to co-operate by the same Spirit with those who are so ordained by them, in their administration of the word and sacraments; hence He may well be said to be always with them, according to the promise He makes to them. How much are we all bound to acknowledge the goodness, to praise, magnify, and adore the name of the Most High God, in that we live in a Church, wherein the Apostolical line hath in all ages been preserved entire, there having been a constant succession of such bishops in it, as were truly and properly successors to the Apostles by virtue of that Apostolical imposition of hands, which being begun by the Apostles, hath been continued from one to another, ever since their time down to ours. By which means the same Spirit which was breathed by our Lord into His Apostles is, together with their office, transmitted to their lawful successors, the pastors and governors of our Church at this time; and acts, moves, and assists at the administration of the several parts of the Apostolical office in our days as much as ever. From whence it follows that the means of grace which we now enjoy are in themselves as powerful and effectual as they were in the Apostles' days, and if they prove not always so successful now as they were then, that cannot be imputed to any want of efficacy in them, but some defect or other in those who use them. For they who are duly prepared cannot but always find the same effect from them, because there is always the same cause, even the Spirit of God moving upon His word and sacraments when administered by our Church, as well as when administered by the Apostles, to whom it was first given."

Additional Note from Dr. Jarvis's Harmony.

The events of the last chapters of the Evangelists are related by each according as they were fixed upon his memory, or illustrated his subject. There is no difficulty in reconciling them and making a continuous narrative, on the common and fair principles of explaining other books. The following order of events, as arranged by Dr. Jarvis, the Historiographer of the Church, is lucid and satisfactory:

Friday evening, between five and six, March 26.

Joseph and Nicodemus, followed by the women, bear the body of Jesus to the sepulchre. The two Marys remain until sunset, after the entombing was complete. Matt. xxvii. 61; Mark xv. 47; Luke xxiii. 54. The other women return before the sunset, which was the beginning of the Sabbath, when no work was allowed, and prepare spices for the following week. Luke xxiii. 55–56.

Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, March 27.

1. The Pharisees request the sealing of the sepulchre. Matt. xxvii. 62–65.

2. They seal it at the end of the Sabbath, after sunset: first, of course, satisfying themselves that the body was safe. Matt. xxvii. 66.

3. At the same time, Mary Magdalene, Mary, mother of James and Joses, and Salome, went to buy spices against the next day. Mark xvi. 1.

Easter Sunday, March 28.

1. Near three A. M. the two Marys left their dwelling, and calling for Salome, were on their way to the tomb. Matt. xxviii. 1; John xxi.

2. About the same time the Angel descended, and the Lord arose from the dead. Matt. xxviii. 2–4. The guards recovering fled.

3. The three women from some unknown cause (may not the closed gates of the city have been a sufficient cause?) reached the sepulchre about six A. M. They see the stone rolled back, and Mary Magdalene returns to tell Peter and John. Mark 2–4; John xx. 1, 2.

4. The other two women enter the sepulchre, and see the angel within. Matt. xxviii. 5–8; Mark 5–8.

5. Peter and John came after their departure, followed by Mary Magdalene. The two disciples soon left. Luke xxxiv. 12; John xx. 3–10.

6. Mary remained weeping; saw the two angels: and then the Lord. Mark xvi. 9; John xx. 11–17.

7. She then joined the other Mary and Salome: and the three saw the Lord. Matt. xxviii. 9–10.

8. The other band of women, who had come from Galilee, being in greater numbers, had collected more slowly, now came and saw the two angels. Luke xxiv. 1–9.

9. The women being assembled, relate these things to the disciples, who doubt. Mark xvi. 10–11; Luke xxiv. 10, 11: John xx. 18.

10 The High Priests plot to make a false tale. Matt. xxviii. 11–15.

11. *Afternoon of Easter Sunday.* Two disciples on their way to Emmaus, were met by Jesus. Mark xvi. 12, 13; Luke xxiv. 13-32. They return at once to Jerusalem, and

12. The disciples hearing from them their story, inform them in turn that the Lord had appeared to Peter. Luke xxiv. 33–35.

13. Jesus appeared in their midst. Luke xxiv. 36–38; John xx. 19-20. Thus ended Easter Sunday.

1. During the week Thomas doubted, and on the following *Sunday, April* 4, our Lord appeared again to the eleven. Mark xvi. 14; John xx. 26–31.

2. Our Lord was seen on the shore of Tiberias. John xxi. 15–25.

3. Again on a mountain (Mt. Tabor) in Galilee to the eleven and to above five hundred brethren at once. Matt. xxviii. 16–17; 1 Cor. xv. 6.

4. He was seen of James (who was to be first to follow Him. Acts xii. 2), and of all the Apostles. 1 Cor. xv. 7.

May. Our Lord remained on earth "forty days" (Acts i. 3), giving commands to the disciples. Matt. xxviii. 18–20; Mark xvi 15–18; John xx. 21–23.

5. *Holy Thursday, May 6th.* Forty days after the resurrection our Lord led

them out to the Mount of Olives *and ascended into Heaven.* Mark xvi. 19; Luke xxiv. 50–53; Acts. 1–2.

6. Matthias was chosen to the place of Judas, probably on Sunday, May 9th.

7. May 16. *Pentecost,* or *Whit-Sunday.* The disciples were commanded to await the event of this day. Luke xxiv. 4–9; Acts i. 4–8; ii.

After which they went forth and spread the Church of Christ, the blessed gift of the Saviour, to us sinful men. Mark xvi. 20.

8. Jesus appeared after this as in heaven to St. Stephen (Acts vii. 56); was heard from thence by Saul of Tarsus (Acts viii. and xxvi.); and in vision to St. John. Rev. i. 2–20.

"Grant, O Lord, that as we are baptized into the death of Thy blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, so by continual mortifying our corrupt affections, we may be buried with Him; and that through the grave and gate of death we may pass to our joyful resurrection, for His merits, who died, and was buried, and rose again for us, Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

"Almighty God, who showest to them that are in error the light of Thy truth, to the intent that they may return into the way of righteousness; grant unto all those who are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion, that they may avoid those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen."

"Keep, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy household the Church with Thy perpetual mercy: and because the frailty of man without Thee cannot but fall, keep us ever by Thy help from all things hurtful, and lead us to all things profitable to our salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was [a]baptized of John in Jordan.

10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens ‖opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him.

11 And there came a voice from heaven, *saying*, [b]Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

12 And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness.

13 [c]And he was there in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.

a Matt. 3. 13. Lu. 3. 21. ‖ Or, *cloven* or *rent*. *b* Ps. 2. 7. *c* Lu. 4. 1, &c.

14 Now after that John was put in prison, [d]Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the [e]gospel of the kingdom of God,

15 And saying, [f]The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

16 Now [g]as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

18 And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

d Matt. 4. 23. *e* Lu. 8. 1. *f* Dan. 9. 25; Gal. 4. 4; Eph. 1. 10. *g* Matt. 4. 18; Lu. 5. 4.

12, 13. *The Spirit driveth Him.* With the consent of His own will. This was an unusual impulse of the Holy Ghost, *controlling* His human will. This Divine inspiration was known to the Jews, as appears from the remonstrance of Obadiah to Elijah (1 Kings xviii. 12), and the opinions of the prophets. 2 Kings, ii. 16; Ezek. iii. 12; Acts viii. 39. It was this *supernatural* impulse which led Jesus into those dreadful solitudes. The Holy Spirit left free His own will, but manifested itself by a sufficient control to demand of Him only obedience. ¶ *With the wild beasts.* The scene of the Temptation was a dreadful solitude of rough rocks, mountains and ravines, unfit for the dwellings of men, and occupied only by the wild beasts. When St. Mark differs from the former Gospel, he adds some graphic and striking feature to the picture. Satan, whose nature has been pictured to our imaginations by wild beasts, first used these inferior agents to daunt the mind of Jesus, before he appeared in person. ¶ *The angels ministered.* This happened after the enemy had been resisted and driven off, as is related by St. Matthew, iv. 11.

14. *Now after that John, &c.* The temptation occurred in *February;* the imprisonment of John by Herod Antipas, and its consequent events, in the *December* following. See Matt. xiv. 3. ¶ *Jesus came into Galilee.* Supposing Him to be at Jerusalem, at the feast of the Dedication (Dec. 1–8), St. Mark represents Him as leaving it to return to Galilee. John iv. 3. All danger of division among the first disciples was prevented by the timely removal of John. He was imprisoned by Herod Antipas.

15. *The time is fulfilled.* The Christ is present. The time for His appearing, which was marked out in the prophets, has expired. See Dan. ix. 25. St. John had just before announced it as about to end, and Jesus now declares it as passed. ¶ *The kingdom, &c.* See Matt. iii. 2. ¶ *Repent ye, and believe the Gospel.* Says Bishop Beveridge: "Let us observe from this text the necessary connection which subsists between *faith* and *repentance.* They are both necessary

19 And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

20 And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

21 And they went into [a]Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath-day he entered into the synagogue and taught.

a Matt. 4. 13; Lu. 4. 31. *b* Matt. 7. 28.

22 And they were [b]astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

23 And there [c]was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

24 Saying, Let *us* alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

25 And Jesus rebuked him,

c Lu. 4. 33, &c.

to salvation: repentance, because without it we cannot go to Christ; and faith, because without it we can receive no benefits from His atoning merits. Faith without repentance, is nothing but a groundless presumption; and repentance, without faith in the merits of our Redeemer, can avail nothing to our salvation; we must not only repent, but we must believe the Gospel."

16–20. See notes, Matt. iv. 18–22.

21–27. See also Luke iv. 31–37.

21. *Went into Capernaum.* His own city. It was situated on the western shore of the sea of Galilee. See note, Matt. iv. 13. ¶ *On the Sabbath.* The original word is in the plural, seeming to imply that He was in the habit of doing this. The event following of course happened on one particular Sabbath, immediately after His return from Judea. ¶ *Synagogue.* See note, Matt. iv. 23.

22. *He taught them, &c.* See note, Matt. viii. 29. The teaching is mentioned before the miracle. It points out the connection between them. Jesus taught with great power, and while men were astonished at the clearness of His applications of their Scriptures, and the great claims which He made upon them, He confirmed His doctrine before their eyes, by doing such works as could be done by Divine power alone.

23. *A man with an unclean spirit.* See note, Matt. iv. 24. This man had strayed into the synagogue, perhaps in a lucid interval, or it may be, irritated and driven by the unclean spirit, conscious that the great power of God was about to be manifested in the destruction of the works of the devil.

24. *Let us alone.* While men are doubting, evil spirits proclaim His majesty. The demon uses the plural pronoun, speaking in the name of all his kind. He feared in seeing Jesus that the hour had come when they were all to be remitted to the darkness of the abyss. ¶ *What have we to do with Thee?* An occasional form of salutation, implying some hostility or irritation. Did the unclean spirit utter this urged by abject fear, and oppressed by the presence of the Holy One, so repugnant to his own vile nature? Or did he aim in this address, by a feeble malice, to turn the attention of men away from the truth which Jesus had been speaking? Did he seek to soften the just anger of Jesus against him, as the criminal often seeks by cries and petitions of mercy to escape punishment? It is evident that he meant to do harm, for he is rebuked and commanded to keep silence. ¶ *Art Thou come to destroy us?* "To come out of a man," says Theophylact, "the devil considers as his own perdition; for devils are ruthless, thinking they suffer some evil, so long as they are not troubling men." He dreads the sudden coming

saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

26 And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.

27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine *is* this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

28 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.

29 And [a]forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

30 But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever; and anon they tell him of her.

31 And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

32 And at even when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them

a Matt. 8. 14; Lu. 4. 38.

of judgment. Heb. x. 27. ¶ *The Holy One of God.* The Messiah. Dan. ix. 24.

25. *And Jesus rebuked him.* Spake sternly to him, and ordered him to keep silence. In this exercise of power Jesus claimed a higher authority than the archangel Michael dared to do. The latter when contending with Satan said, "*The Lord rebuke thee*" (Jude 9); but Jesus rebukes in His own name. He refused to receive the testimony of this evil spirit, either, 1. Because the hour of His glorious manifestation over them had not yet come. While men were doubting they would be easily led to form false notions of His intentions. He came chiefly to save men from sin. Miracles and the out-casting of demons were to be subservient to this object. He did not choose then to found their faith on the witness of wicked spirits. 2. Or, He may have rebuked the spirit to manifest the hostility between them. The Jews were too much inclined to reverence the very madness of demoniacs, and to listen to their fanatic ravings. Jesus prevents any appearance of sympathy between them and Himself, by rebuking the spirit before He ejects him. The spirit of fanaticism always exposes men to a similar danger. God will be worshipped in soberness, righteousness and truth, not by the delirious starts and cries of terror and false excitement. ¶ *Hold thy peace.* Be speechless. The word means *be muzzled*, as a brute beast which has dared to go out of its limits.

26. *And when the unclean spirit, &c.* Evil tempers always defeat their own wishes. If the spirit had passed out quietly the miracle would not have been so evident. The people seeing it injure and abuse its victim could not doubt. It also "cried with a loud voice." Jesus had muzzled him by His word, and as a brute beast he manifests his anguish in inarticulate cries of rage. St. Luke (iv. 35) says that the man was unhurt, after the spirit left him.

27, 28. *And they were all amazed, &c.* This was the effect of this one miracle upon the minds of the spectators. St. Mark had before (verse 22) given an instance of the influence of the teaching of Jesus. It is in keeping with the brevity of his narrative. The results of the works of Christ were such as are here described. Men were amazed, and questioned among themselves, what the meaning and end of these works could be? what must be the character of One who could manifest this power?

29–31. See notes, Matt. viii. 14, 15.

32–34. See notes, Matt. viii. 16, 17.

that were possessed with devils.

33 And all the city was gathered together at the door.

34 And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils‖ to speak, because they knew him.

35 And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

36 And Simon, and they that were with him, followed after him.

37 And when they had found him, they said unto him, All *men* seek for thee.

‖ Or, *to say that they knew Him.*

32. *And at even.* The Jewish day ended at sunset. The people would not bring the sick until the Sabbath was over. The Jews had interpreted the Fourth Commandment in the strictest sense, as forbidding every thing which could in anywise be called labor.

33. *And all the city.* All the people of Capernaum. None would be absent from a repetition of such miracles.

34. *And suffered not the devils to speak.* Says Theophylact: "The reason that He forbade the devils to speak, was to teach us not to believe (i.e. found our faith upon) them, even if they say true. For if once they find persons to believe them, they mingle truth with falsehood." Afterwards (comp. Matt. viii. 29, 32), in the solitary places of Gadara, with only His disciples around Him, He suffered the demons to speak.

35–37. *And in the morning, &c.* St. Luke says, "when it was day." Luke iv. 42. The difference between the two is only apparent. Jesus arose before day and went into a lonely place in the mountains around Capernaum, and there prayed. St. Luke intending to relate the effect of His previous works upon the people, makes no mention of the previous prayer, but marks the time when the people found Him. St. Luke's words mean literally, "when day was coming on." ¶ *And departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.* Our Lord, at certain times sought solitude for the purpose of refreshing His soul by prayer. See Matt. xiv. 23; xxvi. 36; Luke vi. 12; ix. 28, 29. We may not intrude upon His privacy to ask the subject of those prayers, beyond what has been revealed. As He was tempted in all points like as we are, so did He seek for new supplies of strength, where alone it can be found. We may believe that much the larger part of His petitions were made for His disciples. In the present instance, He seems to seek the silence of the solitary place, and the quiet beauties of the early morning, to refresh His own soul, after the scenes of the crowd which thronged Him previously. He avoided also the appearance of exciting commotions among the people. From the example of our Lord in these lonely prayers in mountains and other like places, the Christian may gain arguments to incite him to pray in secret. Before any coming excitement or trial, he will do well to fortify his mind with secret prayer. It gives strength and grace for every conflict. After he has been hurried in the jarrings of crowds or much business, he will be wise to retire and regain the proper temper of humble devotion, which is,

> "The Christian's vital breath,
> The Christian's native air."

And wisely will he gather up his resources by early morning prayer, before he goes out upon the labors and temptations of the day. Thus David saith: "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto Thee, and will look up." Ps. v. 3.

37. *All men seek Thee.* The men of Capernaum were then searching for Him. Peter and the disciples find Him, and exultingly tell Him of the effect of His words. All men seek Him. While they are yet speaking the rest come. Jesus receives and dismisses them: thus beginning that course of discipline, by

38 And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth.

39 And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils.

40 And there came a [a]leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

[a] Matt. 8. 2; Lu. 5. 12.

41 And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth *his* hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean.

42 And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.

43 And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away;

44 And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man;

which He was at last to teach the disciples, that His kingdom was not of this world.

38. *Let us go, &c.* He would avoid that kind of popularity which the disciples sought. The men who were seeking Him, did it from admiration of His amazing power. But He will have them learn another lesson from Him,—the graces of a true faith. He begins gently with His disciples, by leading them away from the temptations to ambition, and dwelling for a while in desert places. See verse 45. ¶ *The next towns.* Five cities, or small towns lay on the western shore of Galilee, which was hardly more than thirteen or fourteen miles in length. "The land of Genessaret" was upon it; a fertile valley among the hills, about five miles long and three wide. ¶ *For therefore came I forth.* St. Luke says, "Therefore am I sent." Luke iv. 43. These phrases can belong properly only to the Son of God, who existing before His advent upon earth, could be said to come forth. He was sent not to one small town, but to preach the Gospel to all, and must seek His hearers in their homes.

39. *And He preached in their synagogues.* See note, Matt. iv. 2–3. ¶ *All Galilee.* See note, Matt. ii. 22. ¶ *And cast out devils.* See note, Matt. iv. 24.

40. *And there came a leper.* See note, Matt. viii. 1–4. This miracle occurred just after the sermon on the mount. ¶ *Kneeling down to Him.* And afterwards falling upon his face, in profound humility. Despairingly he represents the desolation of his heart by his position—the sincerity of his faith by his prayer. ¶ *If Thou wilt.* "Thou canst do it, I know. But *wilt* Thou, to such a wretch as I am!" There alone lies the doubt. The doubt bends him down to the dust. ¶ *Make me clean.* The leprosy was an unclean disease, legally as well as naturally. It was a system of foul sores in the whole body, making the man a *sepulchrum ambulans*, or walking sepulchre. It was unclean by the Levitical law (Lev. xiii. 46), being the type and "*acted parable*" of all deadly sins. David after his sin is supposed to have had in mind the likeness of his state of soul to the disease of the leper. Ps. li. 7.

41. *I will; be thou clean.* He echoes his words in granting his wish. Happy is the prayer, which words itself thus in harmony with the will of God. Leprosy incurable by man was often cured by God. See Numb. xii. 12–15; 2 Kings, v. 7, 15. Jesus cures it by His own *I will.* He claims and exercises in the act divine power and nature.

44. *See thou say nothing to any man.* "Tell no man by the way, but go at once to the temple." It was important that he should be declared sound by the proper authority. Lev. xiv. But grateful for the cure, he would be tempted to linger by the way to spread the news. Engrossed in the mere *miracle*, he would forget the inner meaning

but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things[a] which Moses commanded, for a [b]testimony unto them.

45 But he went out, and began to publish *it* much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places: and they came to him from every quarter.

a Lev. 14. 3, 4, 10; Lu. 5. 14. *b* Matt. 10. 18; Lu. 21. 13.

CHAPTER II.

AND again he entered into Capernaum, after *some* days; and it was noised that he was in the house.

2 And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive *them*, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them.

3 And they [c]come unto him,

c Matt. 9. 1, &c.; Lu. 5. 18, &c.

of it—that it restored him once more to the congregation of the faithful. If he delayed, evil-disposed persons might prejudice the priests against him; who would, from hatred to Jesus, perchance, dare to refuse him the blessing of communion in the sacrifice of the temple—a blessing better than even bodily health. ¶ *Offer for thy cleansing.* Two birds, cedar-wood, scarlet and hyssop, the usual offerings for those defiled by touching the *dead*. Comp. Numb. xix. 6, 13, 18, with Lev. xiv. 4–7. After eight days, the person cured offered two he-lambs, and one ewe-lamb, fine flour and oil. ¶ *For a testimony unto them.* The priest having declared, after his examination in the legal method, the certainty and completeness of the cure, would become himself a witness to the power of Jesus. He would give his certificate that the man had been cured.

45. *Began to publish it much.* We suppose the man to have been obedient on the whole to the order to go to Jerusalem, which was about seventy miles distant. But he could not control himself. He told all he met on the way. ¶ *Could no more openly, &c.* Did not judge it proper to do so, or could not do so, without encouraging a crowd to follow Him. Jesus sought privacy, whenever men sought to make Him a popular idol, or encouraged themselves in the notions of a carnal ambition. When men sought Him for spiritual purposes, He was easily found by them. But He avoided that kind of admiration which proceeded only from a love of miracles. ¶ *The city.* That is, the large town in which this leper had been cured, and the towns around it. He sought the places of retirement, that men, recovering from the wonder at His miracles, might have time to ponder their spiritual meaning.

CHAPTER II.

1. *Into Capernaum.* See note, Matt. iv. 13. ¶ *After some days.* He had retired to a solitary place for prayer, probably on the other shore of the lake of Tiberias, and again He returned to teach the people. It being His object simply to avoid the crowds which followed Him with ambitious or insurrectionary motives, He seeks again the place of His usual residence. ¶ *It was noised.* The villagers spread the news of His return. "Pharisees and doctors of the law, which were come out of every town of Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem," were waiting to hear Him. Luke v. 17. It was an important crisis. These men had gathered to inquire of His opinions and intentions.

2. *So much as about the door.* The door opening into the room, where He was sitting. ¶ *Preached the word unto them.* It was no common multitude. Jesus instructs those who are to become the judges of His claims. But He taught rich and poor the one Gospel. We can judge of this discourse only by

bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four.

4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken *it* up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.

5 When Jesus saw their [a]faith he said unto the sick of the palsy, [b]Son, thy sins be [c]forgiven thee.

6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts,

7 Why doth this *man* thus speak blasphemies ?[d] who can forgive sins but God only ?

8 [e]And immediately, when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts ?

9 Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk ?

10 But that ye may know that the Son of man[f] hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,)

11 I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.

12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

13 And [g]he went forth again by the sea-side; and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them.

14 And as he passed by, he saw Levi the *son* of Alpheus, sitting

a Acts 14. 9. *b* Prov. 3. 11; Heb. 12. 7. *c* Ps. 32. 1; 85. 2. *d* Ps. 130. 4; Dan. 9. 9; Eph. 1. 7. 4. *e* John 2. 24, 25. *f* Acts 5. 31; John 20. 21–23. *g* Matt. 9. 9; Lu. 5. 27.

those which remain. See Matt. v., vi., vii.; John vi. He, perhaps, sought to teach these people the awful effects of sin, in palsying the right efforts of the soul; and the new age which was to come, when faith in Him by the Spirit of grace, should give them strength to live again. He claimed to be Messiah, and proved it by a miracle.

3–12. See notes, Matt. ix. 2–8. ¶ *Palsy.* See note, Matt. iv. 24. ¶ *Borne of four.* Carried by four men, on some light couch, just as they had found him lying.

4. *The press.* The crowd. St. Mark emphasizes the fact of a crowd, to manifest the urgency and resolution of these men. They would not be deterred by common difficulties. And of course we suppose the paralytic man himself to have consented, nay, to have encouraged them by looks, if he could not by words. ¶ *They uncovered the roof.* See note, Matt. ix. 2. St. Luke says *the tiling.* Noble rudeness is this. They will make a way to Jesus, when they cannot find one.

5. *Their faith.* Theirs as well as his. Theirs in pushing through such difficulties,—his in consenting. Faith shown in true and honest actions is always persuasive with God. ¶ *Son.* See Matt. i. 1. The word is one of mercy. It was usual for Jewish rabbis and prophets to use this word to their disciples, for the relation is a sort of spiritual paternity. And this Eastern idiom is preserved in the catechism, which ranks our duty to submit to all teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters under the commandment to "Honor thy father and thy mother." 1 Kings xx. 35; Prov. ii. 1; 1 Tim. i. 2; Tit. i. 4.

12. *We never saw it on this fashion.* We never saw any such cure performed in this way.

13. *By the sea side.* For the greater convenience of the hearers. The house had become too crowded.

14. *Levi, the son of Alpheus.* Or

at ‖the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.

15 And it came to pass, that as Jesus sat at meat in his house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples; for there were many, and they followed him.

16 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?

17 When Jesus heard *it*, he saith unto them, They that are whole, have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but [a]sinners to repentance.

18 And the disciples of John, and of the Pharisees, used to fast: and they come, and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John, and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?

19 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while [b]the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with [c]them, they cannot fast.

20 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them,[c] and then shall they fast in those days.

21 No man also seweth a piece of ‖new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up, taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse.

22 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles.

‖ Or, *at the place where the custom was received.* *a* Is. 55. 7; Matt. 18. 11; Lu. 19. 10. *b* Matt. 25. 1. *c* Acts 13. 2. ‖ Or, *raw or unwrought.*

Matthew the publican. He calls himself Matthew. Mark and Luke call him Levi. It was common for a man to bear two names. ¶ *The receipt of custom.* See note, Matt. ix. 9.

15. *Sat at meat in the house.* Matthew gave a feast, perhaps to mark more significantly his change of life. See Luke v. 29. The company was made up of his friends, publicans and tax-gatherers. Jesus went with him, and manifested His humility in partaking of the food of men so generally despised. See note, Matt. v. 47. ¶ *Sinners.* Outcasts of society; persons who paid little attention to the customs of society, and too little to laws of morality. It was something as if a king would join in a feast with the beggars and vagrants of his kingdom.

16, 17. See note, Matt. ix. 12, 13.

18. *Used to fast.* Were in the habit of fasting, or going without food and drink for religious ends. See note, Matt. ix. 14; Luke v. 33.

19–22. See note, Matt. ix. 15–17.

23–28. See notes, Matt. xii. 1–8. *The cornfields.* Not as we in America would understand, *fields of maize*, or Indian corn, but fields of wheat or barley. The smaller grains they could rub in their hands, and separate from the husk and so eat them. ¶ *Began to pluck.* They were hungry. The laws of Moses allowed any traveller to satisfy his hunger in passing the fields of others, provided he did not carry any part away. Deut. xxiii. 25. The Pharisees objected that the act was unlawful on the *Sabbath day*; they did not condemn it as unlawful on any other day. It was *labor*, and labor of any sort on the Sabbath was wrong, according to their rigid notions.

24. *And the Pharisees said.* Either at the time or soon after. Some passer-

23 [a]And it came to pass, that he went through the corn-fields on the sabbath-day; and his disciples began, as they went, to [b]pluck the ears of corn.

24 And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath-day that which is not lawful?

25 And he said unto them, Have ye never read [c]what David did, when he had need, and was an hungered, he and they that were with him?

26 How he went into the house of God, in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shew-bread, which is not lawful to eat,[d] but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him?

27 And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:

28 [e]Therefore, the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

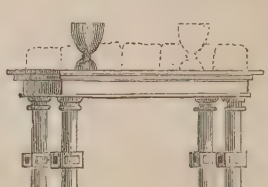
a Matt. 12. 1; Lu. 6. 1. *b* Deut. 23. 25. *c* 1 Sam. 21. 6. *d* Ex. 29. 32, 33; Lev. 24. 9. *e* Matt. 12. 8.

by, the owner of the field, or others may have told the Pharisees, and they seize upon it to make Jesus unpopular.

25. *Have ye never read?* "How perverse is this opinion of yours, when ye have so often read the story of a similar act in the history of the great king David." See note, Matt. xii. 3.

26. *Abiathar the high priest.* See 1 Sam. xxi. 1. Ahimelech was the high priest when this transaction took place. Abiathar was his son and a priest. David, sorely pressed with hunger, asked Ahimelech for the bread which had been used on the shew-tables. It was consecrated bread, and could be eaten only by priests. But *necessity* and mercy were higher laws, in the opinion of both David and Ahimelech; and the precept was violated in the letter, while the honor of God was still sacred in the minds of both. St. Mark says: "The days of Abiathar the high priest, &c.," whereas in the book of Samuel it appears that his father Ahimelech was at that time in the office. Abiathar was the more famous of the two. His father soon died, and he fled to David, afterwards becoming high priest. St. Mark does not say the days when Abiathar was high priest, but during his life. As we might say the Apostle Peter denied his Lord, whereas he was at the time only a disciple, not an Apostle. ¶ *Shew-bread.* See note, Matt. xii. 4.

27. *The Sabbath was made for man.* The object of the Sabbath was the good



Shew Table, from the Arch of Titus.

of man; and in promoting that good we duly honor the day. If cattle fell into pits, the Jews would labor on that day to rescue them. Physicians, nurses and friends may labor for the sick. Servants may work moderately for the actual sustenance of families; though masters should be careful that all such have one part of the day for devotion and rest. Ministers labor in their vocation on that day. Our Lord, in rescuing the Sabbath from the superstitions of the Jews, does not permit the wilful neglect of it. Whenever a people do carefully observe this law, they are happy. The custom produces general blessings; vice hides itself and flees, the bold are restrained by gentle influences of piety, and for awhile the whole community is brought under the control of religion. ¶ *Not man for the Sabbath.*

CHAPTER III.

AND he [a]entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand.

2 And they watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath-day; that they might accuse him.

3 And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth.

4 And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath-days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? but they held their peace.

5 And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the ‖hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched *it* out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

[a] Matt. 12. 9, &c.; Lu. 6. 6, &c.

‖ Or, *blindness.*

As a rigid, Pharisaical way of observing it would indicate. The Lord's day differs in some respects from the *ancient* Sabbath. It is a Sabbath, i. e. a *day of rest*, but is also much more. It is a day of joy and exultation. On it Christ rose, and the Holy Ghost came down on the Church. The Jews laid great stress on the idea of *rest*, and compelled all to remain inactive. The Christian would rather look to the joys of public devotion, and securing that, allow the innocent flow of thought and feeling suitable to a joyous day. And parents may make it a study how far it is right for them to force their children to unnatural inactivity or incessant study on Sunday. If they do so, they may make the day irksome to them. Good things are too good to be made unlovely. Try with all holy arts to make the Lord's day a happy one for children, that they may love its return. A due observance of the Lord's day is equally removed from profaneness and Phariseeism.

28. *Therefore, &c.* The law-giver is above the law. See note, Matt. xii. 8.

CHAPTER III.

1-3. See notes on Matt. xii. 9-13; Luke vi. 6-10.

4. *To do good—or to do evil?* They were watching an opportunity to find fault. Jesus establishes a broad principle, by appealing to their consciences. Which was the better method of keeping the day, or more acceptable to God, to save men from the pains of disease, or to see them suffer and die: to save life, i. e. to take proper means for preserving or restoring to health, or to kill, i. e. to leave all such to perish by neglect? There could be but one answer. They knew that God was merciful, and that He was best served by men in showing mercy. Self-defence, mercy, charity, necessity may find room, even on the Lord's day, and the Christian be in no manner guilty of sin.

5. *With anger.* With displeasure at their ill conduct. The passion of anger is lawful when it is felt against sin, or even against sinners as such. It is wicked when it joins to it the selfish desire of revenge, or loses sight of a wish for the change and repentance of the sinner. The good men of the Bible have shown and allowed anger of the former kind. Ex. xi. 8; xxxii. 19; Eph. iv. 26. Anger against sinners is ascribed to the Lord in a great many passages in the Old Testament. Deut. ix. 20; 1 Kings xi. 9; Ps. vii. 11. In this purer sense, which alone could be felt by a sinless being, it is here used of our Lord. The passion is dangerous in our sinful souls. We should endeavor by all means to control it, lest it hurry us into sin. ¶ *Hardness of their hearts.* Their unwillingness to believe, and to yield to the suggestions of mercy. The poor man who suffered from the withered hand stood in the midst, an object of compassion—fearful, anxious to be saved from his calamity. Jesus had appealed to the very countrymen and acquaint-

6 And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the [a]Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.

7 But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and [b]a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judea,

8 And from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and *from* beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him.

9 And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him, because of the multitude, lest they should throng him.

10 For he had healed many; insomuch that they ‖pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues.

a Matt. 22. 16. *b* Lu. 6. 17.

‖ Or, *rushed.*

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ances of the man, if they will agree to His curing him. But they, hampered by a quibble of superstition, give no answer, and even when convinced of the falsity of their interpretation of the law, they are still unmoved. They oppose only a sullen silence to His reasonings. Truly their hearts were hard, insensible and unfeeling to the lives of men on one side—to the truth of God on the other.

6. *Straightway.* At once. ¶ *Took counsel.* They consulted among themselves the best mode of accomplishing it. ¶ *The Herodians.* See note, Matt. xxii. 16.

7, 8. *Withdrew Himself.* Went into the open country by the sea of Galilee, away from the cities. His hour of suffering had not yet come. He avoids the hostile intentions of enemies. We are never to throw ourselves needlessly into the way of danger. ¶ *Galilee.* See note, Matt. ii. 22. ¶ *Judea.* See note, Matt. ii. 1. *Jerusalem.* This was the principal city of the country of Palestine. The citizens looked down with great contempt upon all who dwelt in Galilee. It was, therefore, no common report which drew them in numbers to hear a prophet of that country. They came for different reasons, some as friends, some to be healed, and some to find fault with, and oppose the Saviour. ¶ *Idumea.* The general name for the region lying south of Palestine, once possessed by the Edomites or descendants of Esau. Herod the great was an Idumæan by descent. Many Jews lived in that country, who heard the rumors of Jesus, and came on a pilgrimage to witness His miracles. ¶ *From beyond Jordan.* From the east side of it. Originally this territory had been assigned to the tribes of Reuben, and Gad, and the half-tribe of Mannasseh. But in the course of ages the character of the inhabitants had become much changed. Many of them were heathen in the time of the Saviour. The country is laid down on the maps under the names of Iturea and Perea. ¶ *Tyre and Sidon.* The country lying along the Mediterranean Sea. See note, Matt. xi. 21. Coming from every quarter they swelled His followers to a great crowd. And encouraged by numbers, and the admiration at His miracles, they began doubtless to entertain seditious thoughts. Jesus provides, therefore, a means of avoiding them, at any moment.

9. *A small ship.* A small fishing boat. There could of course have been no ships on the small sea of Galilee. The Greek word included all classes of vessels. Even the largest of that age, would be esteemed only as small boats by us. ¶ *Lest they should throng Him.* And by crowding about Him, restrain the liberty of His movements. He did not fear danger from the crowd, but rather He provided that they should not seem to have the power over His motions, to make Him appear to consent to their plans. Had He come to be the temporal ruler of His nation, this would have been a time to assume the command of the multitude. ¶ *As many as had plagues.* The Greek word means

11 And unclean spirits, [a]when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.

12 And he straitly charged them, that they should not make him known.

13 [b]And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth *unto him* whom he would: and they came unto him.

14 And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,

15 And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils.

16 And Simon[c] he surnamed Peter.

17 And James the *son* of Zebedee, and John the brother of

a Jas. 2. 19. *b* Matt. 10. 1; Lu. 6. 12; 9. 1. *c* John 1. 42.

scourges. The Jews recognized many diseases to be punishments of sin. And they witnessed it, by calling diseases, scourges of God. Many diseases are the direct punishments of vices; and by the word *plagues,* we bear witness to this fact in a general way.

11, 12. *Unclean spirits.* Evil spirits which are unclean, and lead their victims into all manner of sin and uncleanness. ¶ *Thou art the Son of God.* See notes, ch. i. 24–26. The spirits confessed Him to be the Son of God, i. e. the Messiah, the special messenger of God, who was to appear among men with divine power and majesty. They did not desire to make this confession, but may have been compelled by some unknown influences of His presence; or with a malicious art, desiring to do that which was unfit. Their confessions would inflame the minds of the people, and excite them either to seditious practices, if they believed them, or to hardness and hatred if they doubted them. The time had not come for such a revelation. Men would not yet perceive *the spiritual character* of the Messiah. But urged on by their hatred of the Romans, and by the blind suggestions of a carnal mind, they would only err in judgment and impede His true work in the souls of men. Added to this is the reason stated by the venerable Bede: "A sinner is forbidden to preach the Lord, lest any one listening to his preaching should follow him in his error; for the devil is an evil master, who always mingles false things with true, that the semblance of truth may cover the witness of fraud." Jesus therefore rebukes and silences the evil spirits.

13–19. See notes, Matt. x. 1–4. ¶ *And calleth unto Him whom He would.* Such as He saw fit for the work. This selection was made from all who followed Him.

14. *He ordained twelve.* The word *ordain* contains in it the idea of appointing to a duty or office, in which sense it is used here. The Apostles were fully ordained at the descent of Pentecost, when their graces and powers were made complete. But three periods may be marked up to this completion. 1. Their lesser ordination to *do works of power* (see Matt. x), which was in a manner a diaconate, while their High Priest was present with them. 2. The great Commission and inspiration recorded John xx. 21–23, when Jesus breathed on them and created them priests though still overlooked by His supernatural presence. 3. The full unction and consecration from heaven to be guides and stewards, Apostles and Bishops of the Church. Acts ii. The Prayer Book terms the act of creating the two lesser orders *ordination,* but the higher *consecration;* for the two lesser appear still to have others overseeing them, who *ordain* them; but the higher official having no superior, is more properly said to be consecrated to the service of God.

17. *Boanerges.* The word is made up of two Hebrew words. It signifies

James, (and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder,)

18 And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the *son* of Alpheus, and Thaddeus, and Simon the Canaanite,

19 And Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him: and they went[‖] into a house.

20 And the multitude cometh together again,[a] so that they could not so much as eat bread.

21 And when [‖]his friends heard *of it*, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said,[b] He is beside himself.

‖ Or, *home.* a Ch. 6. 31.

‖ Or, *kinsmen.* b John 7. 5; & 10. 20.

that they were impetuous, earnest, zealous and energetic, as if, in the license of figurative style, they had been *born of the thunder*. Naturally they would have wasted their energies and become the slaves of passion. Luke ix. 54. But when restrained and purified by grace, their powers shone for the beauty and edification of the Church. St. James soon died. Acts xii. 2. But St. John lived long enough to justify the appellation. Under all his gentleness and holy charity, we feel the impulses of a powerful, imaginative and active energy. The summer clouds roll up in the blue sky and become glorious in the sunlight. For all their quietness they have untold magazines of electric power in them, and may change in an instant into bolts of terrific destruction. Jesus did not need tame and passionless men for His work. Grace shows divinely when it curbs a native impetuosity, and proves the might of gentle love in conquering and controlling some *son of thunder*.

18. *Thaddeus.* See note, Matt. x. 3.

20. *They could not so much as eat bread.* They had not time for the common duties of daily life. Generally our Lord paid scrupulous attention to the customs of social life, but at this time it was peculiarly important to attend at once to the necessities of the people. They had come from great distances. They were without occupation. Jesus gives up His own time to them, that they may not in their leisure be meditating plans of sedition. Religion is the great duty of life. At times it may demand of us a disregard of our common habits. But usually he is none the worse Christian, who attends carefully to the wants of common life, in providing righteously and prudently for those who are dependent on him.

21. *When His friends.* His relatives. They did not believe on Him as the Messiah. John vii. 5. Moved by the news of the crowds who attended on Him, and of His choosing special disciples, they probably came over from Nazareth to remonstrate with Him. They feared the dangers to which He would be exposed from the rulers of the nation. Any signs of sedition would have called down on Him the vengeance of the Romans. They were careful for Him in this respect, from a motive of self-preservation. For it was the custom of those times to involve a man's family in the same punishment, in all cases of criminality against the government. ¶ *They went out to lay hold on Him.* They came out probably from Nazareth, where they lived. His reputed father, Joseph, was by this time dead. These were His relations. They desired to use all the force that was possible, to compel Him to listen to reason, and go back with them. It was a great trouble to them that He should leave the occupation in which He had been reared, to wander about the country without visible support. ¶ *He is beside Himself.* In thus running into the danger of exciting the fickle multitude, and making the rulers hostile to Him. They meant kindly. Not having faith in Him, they felt the danger that He was in, without seeing how He would avoid it. It is a proof of the sincerity of St. Mark to record this in-

22 ¶ And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem, said, [c]He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils.

23 And he called them *unto him*, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan?

24 And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

25 And if an house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

26 And if Satan arise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.

27 No [b]man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

28 [c]Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme:

29 But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation:

30 Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

31 ¶ [d]There came then his brethren and his mother, and standing without, sent unto him, calling him.

32 And the multitude sat about him; and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee.

33 And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren?

34 And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold, my mother and my brethren!

35 For whosoever shall [e]do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

a Matt. 9. 34; & 10. 25; Lu. 11. 15; John 7. 20; & 8. 48, 52; & 10. 22.

b Is. 49. 24, 26; Matt. 12. 29. *c* Matt. 12. 31; Lu. 12. 10; 1 John 5. 16. *d* Matt. 12. 46; Lu. 8. 19. *e* Jas. 1. 25; 1 John 2. 17.

cident. If he had suspected at all the truth of what he was writing; if he had not felt an entire trust in the reality of the mission of Christ, as truly sent by God, he would have omitted this event from his narrative. The unbeliever would say: "You, yourself, admit that the common reason of His friends condemned the course of your Messiah." But St. Mark knew and felt that it was a proof of the truth of that Master, that He did, in case of necessity, place the interests of *Eternity* before those of this life; that He was willing to seem mad in the eyes of worldly friends that He might teach men the importance of serving God. Often is it necessary for the believer to show a like disregard of the opinions of unbelievers. For often it becomes our duty to consider our worldly good as nothing worth, in comparison with the soul. The martyr loses his life that he may save his soul. The minister or private Christian forgets his comfort and safety, for the spiritual good of others. See 1 Cor. iv. 10.

22–30. *And the scribes.* See notes on Matt. xii. 24–30. He had healed a man possessed with a devil, blind and dumb. The scribes, moved by another kind of possession, the corruption of the heart with malice and envy, invented this insulting speech. They had been dispatched from Jerusalem to watch Him and destroy His influence with the people. It is worthy of note that they

CHAPTER IV.

AND he [a]began again to teach by the sea-side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea, on the land.

2 And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine,

3 Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow.

4 And it came to pass as he sowed, some fell by the way-side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

5 And some fell on [b]stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth:

6 But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it [c]withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

8 And other fell on [d]good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up, and increased, and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.

9 And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10 And when[e] he was alone, they that were about him, with the twelve, asked of him the parable.

11 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but [f]unto them that are without, all *these* things are done in parables:

12 That [g]seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not under-

a Matt. 13. 1, 2; Lu. 8. 4. &c. *b* Ez. 11. 19; & 36. 26. *c* Jas. 1. 11. *d* Heb. 6. 7, 8. *e* Matt. 13. 10; Lu. 8. 9, &c. *f* 1 Cor. 5. 12; Col. 4. 5; 1 Thes. 4. 12. *g* Is. 6. 9; Mal. 13. 14; Lu. 8. 10; John 12. 40; Acts 28. 26; Rom. 11. 8.

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who saw the miracles of Jesus, did not pretend to doubt their reality. That folly was reserved for the subtlety of a later age.

31–35. See notes, Matt. xii. 46–50. Says an ancient writer: "Let us be assured that we are His brethren and His sisters, if we do the will of the Father; that we may be joint heirs with Him. For He *discerns us not by sex, but by our deeds.*"

CHAPTER IV.

1–9. See notes, Matt. xiii. 1–9.

10–13. *When he was alone.* See notes, Matt. xiii. 10–17. He made this exposition of the parable to the disciples privately.

12. *That seeing they may see, &c.* God does not cause men to be ignorant of their duties, nor deceive them with a mere appearance of instruction. This would be cruelty. But He leaves them free to certain laws which act invariably. A man who refuses to do right, for a length of time, will at last become perversely fixed in the wrong. He will invent new reasons and feign excuses to justify his wrong. At last He will so utterly deceive himself, that he will become insensible to the clearest demonstrations of truth. The same Mosaic law became a savor of life unto pious Simeon and Anna—the savor of death unto Caiaphas and Annas. The former used the light of the law to catch its spirit, and were ready to welcome the Christ at His coming. The other remained in the *letter* of the Mosaic ritual, indulged pride and worldliness, and rejected and crucified Him. The same Gospel is heard by the one who seeing will not see, i. e. who will not do

stand; lest at any time they should be converted, and *their* sins should be forgiven them.

13 And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

14 ¶ [a]The sower soweth the word.

15 And these are they by the way-side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

16 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

17 And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

18 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word,

19 And the cares of this world, and [b]the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

20 And these are they which are sown on good ground: such as hear the word, and receive *it*, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred.

21 ¶ And he [c]said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick.

22 For there [d]is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad.

23 If [e]any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

24 And he said unto them,

a Matt. 13. 19. *b* 1 Tim. 6. 9, 17. *c* Matt. 5. 15; Lu. 8. 16; & 11. 33. ‖ The word in the original signifieth a less measure as Matt. 5. 15. *d* Matt. 10. 26; Lu. 12. 2. *e* Matt. 11. 15, v. 9.

his duty when he learns it; and the one, who hearing begins to obey it, and goes on to see wondrous things in its mysteries. This saying which is often cited in Scripture was a proverb, or general truth often used by men of that age. We have a similar proverb: "None so blind as those who will not see."

14–20. See notes, Matt. xiii. 18–23.

21. *Is a candle brought, &c.* The doctrines of our holy religion, are like light. The object of Jesus in revealing them to men, was to have them look to Him and be saved. Our Lord used this same figure in Matt. v. 15. He intimates here that His word is given in parables, not to be concealed from them, but to be the more fully understood in the end. The parable is in a manner the *candlestick*, which holds up the light, and gives it a rest, and helps us to carry it about. We remember a parable easily. It illustrates the most secret truths by the relations of every day life. ¶ *Bushel.* A measure containing about a pint less than a peck. Matt. v. 15. ¶ *Bed.* The wooden couch, on which they reclined at meals. Men at a feast do not put the candles under them, and out of sight, but in full view, that they may see how to partake of the dainties on the tables. So the parable sets forth truth for practical use.

22. *There is nothing hid, &c.* See notes, Matt. x. 26.

23. *Take heed what ye hear.* Rather *how* ye hear it. They had been chosen by Jesus to hear and remember His teachings. ¶ *With what measure, &c.* If they learned and studied, so would

Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear, shall more be given.

25 For he [a]that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.

26 ¶ And he said,[b] So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;

27 And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.

28 For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

29 But when the fruit is

[a] Matt. 13. 12; & 25. 29; Lu. 8. 18; & 19. 26.

[b] Matt. 13. 24.

they obtain larger measures of knowledge in sacred things, and use greater influences over men. Thus the reward would be greater. See note, Matt. vii. 12. ¶ *Mete.* Measure. An old English word remaining in use only in the phrase *metes and bounds.* ¶ *Unto you that hear.* To you that are attentive and take care to understand, more insight and enjoyment in sacred truth will be given.

25. *For he that hath, &c.* See notes, Matt. xiii. 12. Our Lord is speaking here of truth, as a gift to the minds of men, which, duly received and pondered, increases in luminousness and force. They find new reasons for it. They follow it up. They love it, and fixing it in their minds, they "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." But if one neglects truth from selfish or wicked passions, it shrinks up, and is lost. They are troubled by it, long to forget it, and that which was given to them is taken away by their neglect. Therefore should the young nurse and cherish in their minds the teachings of the Catechism, not only for the sake of learning what their duty is, but of also doing it. There are things "which a Christian ought to know and believe to his *soul's health.*" Our health is God's gift, yet we can cherish or destroy it. So of the soul's health. It comes from the free grace of God. But we are able to value and cherish it, by the right use of the means of grace, or to destroy it by sin, ignorance and folly.

26. *So is the kingdom of God.* See note, Matt. iii. 2. The Saviour was at that time teaching them of His kingdom and sowing the divine seed in their hearts. He would leave them to cherish the seed and form the Church without His presence among them.

27. *And should sleep, and rise night and day.* A man after planting a field goes his way and lives as usual. He sleeps at night and rises by day, as was his wont. So the Lord was then sowing seed, but would leave them to themselves. God would nurture the seed, but He, the Husbandman of the vineyard, would be absent. ¶ *He knoweth not how.* We only know in many doctrines what the farmer knows of the seed, that he must use the means —must plant and water—but that God giveth the increase. 1 Cor. iii. 6. Our duty is to obey the word of Scripture and do all that it commands; knowing that in religion, as in the natural world, it is a vain search to seek to penetrate into the powers of the Holy Spirit, and to ask with Nicodemus, *How can these things be?*

28. *For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself.* A man can only leave the seed to the natural laws of production which God has placed in the elements. The earth *seems* to do it, but God is the First Cause and Preserver of all the creation. The Christian looks up to Him and beholds in all things His handiwork. "He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth." Ps. civ. 14. ¶ *First the blade.* The tender, succulent shoot that first appears; any thing can crush it; but a kind care preserves it. So does God take care of the tender be-

‖brought forth, immediately he putteth in the [a]sickle, because the harvest is come.

30 ¶ And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the [b]kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?

‖ Or, *ripe.* *a* Rev. 14. 15. *b* Matt. 13. 31; Lu. 13. 18; Acts 2. 41; & 4. 4; & 5. 14; & 19. 20; Eph. 3. 10.

31 *It is* like a grain of mustard-seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth:

32 But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out

ginnings of piety. ¶ *Then the ear.* The spike of wheat, containing the young grains, which comes later than the blade, and gives promise of the coming crop. ¶ *The full corn.* The grain fully formed and ready to mature. Says St. Gregory: "When therefore we conceive good desires, we put seed into the ground: when we begin to work rightly, we are the blade. When we increase to the perfection of good works, we arrive at the ears: when we are firmly fixed in the perfection of the same working, we already put forth the full corn in the ear." The little child has the seed of grace pledged to it in infancy. When it begins to think and to know the first rudiments of right, it is easily abashed, and as easily repents. It is like the weak blade touched with the dew drops. It acts right, and gradually grows strong to serve God. Age matures the work, and by patience, energy, and love, it obeys the Saviour and becomes fruitful in piety. When shall we see parents and sponsors remembering "their part and duty—that their children be brought up to lead a godly and a Christian life?" Piety ought to begin in infancy. It would oftener do so, if parents would only dare to believe their privileges.

29. *Immediately he putteth in the sickle.* In the harvest time. So our Lord has appointed a harvest time in the end of the world. He would leave His disciples. He would gather them into the granary of the grave till the great harvest of the resurrection. This is the first or immediate explication of this parable. But its force is equally striking if we look on the end of each individual life as a harvest. For death, like a sickle, ends our growth. A Christian grows in grace till the end come. Like a ripe shock of wheat, the Husbandman gathers him up to bloom again in the skies; to repeat in songs of everlasting joy the record of his struggles and conquests here on earth.

30. *Whereunto shall we liken.* He seems to have looked round for some illustration to impress the truth more deeply upon their hearts. Perchance some bush of the mustard plant, tall and vigorous, with the small birds singing in its boughs, may have been near by. Thus did our Lord gather lessons of wisdom from the works of creation, and make the very herbs of the field bear witness to the powers of grace. Perhaps we shall find in heaven that this was not an accidental mode of teaching; but that creation has been made from the very beginning to bear witness, by a thousand yet unseen analogies, to the wonders of Redemption. It is a pleasing faith to believe that the creation is a great subsidiary preacher, a wonderful analogy to the kingdom of God. ¶ *The kingdom of God.* See notes, Matt. iii. 2.

31, 32. See notes on Matt. xiii. 31, 32.

33. *Spoke the word.* The Gospel. After some years the Gospel of the kingdom began to be called *the word*, because its character as a system of instruction from God began to appear more evident. So the word *Church* is used but *three times* in the Gospel, and that in St. Matthew's narrative. But in the epistles, &c., it is used one hundred and fourteen times. While the phrase *kingdom of God* or *of heaven*, is used but thirty-four times in the latter part of the New Testament, and in the Gospels about one hundred and twenty-seven times. Changes in words are a

great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.

33 And with many such parables spake he the word unto them,[a] as they were able to hear *it.*

34 But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

35 And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.

36 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships.

37 [b]And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, [c]carest thou not that we perish?

39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. [d]And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

40 And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? [e]how is it that ye have no faith?

41 And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

a John 16. 12, 13; Acts 2. 4. *b* Matt. 8. 23; Lu. 8. 22.

c Ps. 10. 1. *d* Ps. 89. 9. *e* Ps. 46. 1, 2.

valuable part of history. They show the changes in the views of men, in regard to particular truths.

34. *Without a parable spake He not unto them.* That is, about the *word of the kingdom.* It was in regard to that kingdom that Jesus was so careful, because it was not yet established, nor could be until He had been put to death. And if He had taught them plainly of it, they would have erred and been in danger of speaking unadvisedly to others; in which case the rulers of the nation might have pretended a good reason for their hostility to Him. And therefore Jesus took pains to *expound,* that is, explain to them these things *when they were alone.* This forms no ground for any doctrine of reserve in preaching the Gospel now. For there is no such reason possible at this time. The whole Gospel is finished and given to the saints. A minister may be prudent in his method of teaching, but not Jesuitical.

35–41. See notes, Matt. viii. 18–27.

36. *Even as He was in the ship.* It was but a short sail, and they made no preparation, but with some haste, as it would appear, sailed off from the shore. ¶ *Other little ships.* Or little boats. Probably a part of the multitude undertook to follow Him.

37. *Was now full.* The Greek implies that the boat was in the very act of filling with the waves, so that there was not a moment to be lost.

39. *Peace, be still.* "For," says an old writer, "from the troubling of the sea arises a certain sound, which appears to be *its voice,* threatening danger, and, therefore, by a sort of metaphor, He fitly commands tranquillity, by a word signifying silence; just as in the restraining of the winds which trouble the sea with their violence, He uses a rebuke. So Christ, the King of all creatures, by His threats restrained the violence of the winds and compelled the sea to be silent." Thus does He often speak *peace* to hearts tossed on the troubled sea of life, and stills their fears.

CHAPTER V.

AND they [a]came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.

2 And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the [b]tombs a man with an unclean spirit,

3 Who had *his* dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not even with chains:

4 Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any *man* tame him.

5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.

6 But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him,

7 And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of the Most High God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.

8 (For he said unto him, [c]Come out of the man, *thou* unclean spirit.)

9 And he asked him, What *is* thy name? And he answered, saying, My name *is* Legion: for we are many.

10 And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country.

11 Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding.

12 And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the

a Matt. 8. 28; Lu. 8. 26.

b Rom. 5. 12. *c* Rev. 2. 14.

CHAPTER V.

1–20. See note, Matt. viii. 28–34; also Luke viii. 26–39.

3. *His dwelling among the tombs.* St. Mark is more graphic in his account of this man than the other evangelists. The man dwelt among the unclean dead: a state of life horrible to the Jews as a violation of the purity of their law.

4. *He had been often bound with fetters and chains.* A striking propensity of mad people is to tear their clothes off, and break through every thing which restrains them. This man was possessed with devils, but in outward appearance he acted and appeared as madmen do at this day.

5. *Cutting himself with stones.* The history of mad-houses affords thousands of instances of this circumstance. In them all, means are adopted to prevent the furious from mutilating and destroying themselves.

7. *Thou torment me not.* That is, before the time. Matt. viii. 29. This is the speech of a *reasoning spirit.* It alludes to the punishment which is to be imposed on wicked beings hereafter. Jude 6. The man who was possessed did not know of such a coming wo, nor did the hearers understand the meaning of it.

9. *My name is Legion.* A division of the Roman armies was called a *legion.* It numbered about six thousand men. "He can find no other way to express his state than in an image drawn from the reminiscences of his former life. He had seen the thick and serried ranks of a Roman legion, that fearful instrument of oppression, that sign of terror and fear to the conquered nations, and before which the Jews more especially quailed. Even such, at once one and many, cruel and inexorable and strong, were the powers that were tyrannizing over him."—*Trench.*

10. *Not send them away.* As St. Luke (viii. 31) says, "not into the deep," that is, *the abyss*, that gloomy abode beneath the earth, where such beings were punished.

swine, that we may enter into them.

13 And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand,) and were choked in the sea.

14 And they that fed the swine fled, and told *it* in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done.

15 And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and [c]clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.

16 And they that saw *it* told them how it befel to him that was possessed with the devil, and *also* concerning the swine.

17 And they began [b]to pray him to depart out of their coasts.

18 And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him.

19 Howbeit Jesus suffered him

[a] Is. 49. 25; Col. 1. 13; 2 Tim. 1. 7.

[b] Job 21. 14.

15. *Clothed, and in his right mind.* The Gadarenes saw this, saw that a man so well known among them was saved and restored; clothed who had been wilfully naked, and in his right mind who had before lived in the unclean abodes of the dead. Yet they prefer their pitiable possessions to such a glorious power, and choose to keep their swine, rather than a Saviour from such tormentors.

18. *Prayed Him that he might be with Him.* Well might he make this petition. He knew the former sins. Waked at last from the frightful fear of this long possession, he has a melancholy recollection of his gloomy state. Filled with fear of a return of the evil spirits, and gratitude towards his Deliverer, he earnestly desires to accompany Him, that he may be safe. Is he not a picture of a sinner, at last rescued from the power of Satan, waked to life and light, restored to himself, and clothed with the robe of the hopeful penitent? He too would find safety in following Jesus. And he may follow Him and be safe.

19. *Tell them how great things.* Jesus usually commanded those whom He cured *in Judea* to be silent concerning Him, because there the people might too easily be excited to outbreaks either in His favor or against Him. But now He orders the contrary. The people beg Him to depart, and He prepares to do so. But in mercy to them He leaves behind Him a witness to His kingdom and power. Moreover, He may have chosen to teach the Gadarene that He could restrain the spirits of evil as well at a distance as when present; that he was now as safe, while telling the work of mercy, as if he were in the constant presence of his Restorer.

20. *Decapolis.* A region of ten cities. Gadara was one of them. See note, Matt. iv. 25. The man now mingles among men, and bears witness to Jesus in all the cities of his native land. Nothing could better shut out the demons who had plagued him. He is safe from them while he binds around him the spiritual charm of an active wish to do good.

22–43. See notes on Matt. ix. 18–26.

33. *Lieth at the point of death.* Is *in extremis*, or just dying.

26. *Had suffered many things.* Had been the patient of many physicians; and had spent all she had to obtain relief, but in vain.

27. *Came in the press behind.* In the crowd. Says St. Chrysostom, "This woman, who was celebrated and known to all, did not dare to approach the

not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how [c]great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.

20 And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him. And all men did marvel.

21 [b]And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him: and he was nigh unto the sea.

22 And [c]behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet,

23 And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death: *I pray thee*, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live.

24 And *Jesus* went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him.

25 And a certain woman which had an [d]issue of blood twelve years,

26 And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse,[e]

27 When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind,[f] and touched his garment:

28 For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole.

29 And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in *her* body that she was healed of that plague.

30 And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that [g]virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?

31 And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?

32 And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing.

33 But the woman, fearing and

a Ps. 66. 16. *b* Matt. 9. 1; Lu. 8. 40. *c* Matt. 9. 18; Lu. 8. 41.

d Lev. 15. 25; Matt. 9. 20. *e* Ps. 108. 12; Jer. 30. 12, 13, 14. *f* Matt. 14. 36. *g* Lu. 6. 19; & 8. 46.

Saviour openly, nor to come to Him, because according to the law, she was unclean; for this reason she touched Him behind, and not in front, for that she durst not do, but only ventured to touch the hem of His garment. It was not however the hem of the garment, but her frame of mind that made her whole." It was the *will of Jesus*, not His clothes, that gave the blessing. Hence He turned around to show that He had been consenting to the deed.

30. *Virtue had gone out of Him.* Power to cure disease. ¶ *Who touched my clothes?* This question was not asked in ignorance, but to allow the woman to come forward and declare herself. Thus Jesus changes her opinion of the miracle from being a mere *charm wrought by His clothes*, as she may have thought, to a true deed of His love for her faith. In the former case she would have gone home, with such an opinion as the ignorant Romanist has of his relics or amulets, or images of saints—mere irrational charms, without a moral meaning. But in the latter she is taught that her faith in Him had been the avenue of her cure.

34. *Daughter.* A word of love, to reassure her. "Faith in Christ makes us His children."—*St. Chrysostom.* ¶ *Be*

trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.

34 And he said unto her, Daughter, thy [a]faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

35 While [b]he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's *house certain* which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further?

36 As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe.

37 And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James.

38 And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly.

39 And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead,[c] but sleepeth.

40 And they laughed him to scorn. [d]But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying.

41 And he took the damsel by the hand, and saith unto her, Talitha-cumi: which is, being interpreted, Damsel, (I say unto thee,) arise.

42 And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was *of the age* of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment.

43 And he [e]charged them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat.

a Matt. 9. 22; Ch. 10. 52; Acts 14. 9.
b Lu. 8. 49. *c* John 11. 11. *d* Acts 9. 40.
e Matt. 8. 4; & 9. 30; & 12. 16; & 17. 9; Ch. 3. 12; Lu. 5. 14.

whole of thy plague. "Fear no return of thy wasting disorder." "It was thy scourge, put on thee by the just law of the Divine government, for sins, as thou knowest. And now that faith has been begotten of thy sufferings and made thy soul to abhor the sin, be whole also of the punishment of it. She was not only healed in body, but also from the causes of bodily pain—that is, from her sins."—*Pseudo-Chrys.*

38. *The tumult.* The confused crowd. It is the custom in the East to crowd about the dead and bewail them in a noisy manner. ¶ *But sleepeth.* See note, Matt. ix. 34. The word in this connection means actual death. See John xi. 11, 14.

41. ¶ *Took the damsel, &c.* "How sovereign was thy touch, blessed Redeemer! It cleansed even the lepers, gave sight to the blind, opened the ears of the deaf, made the dumb to speak, and raised the dead! So touch our blind, polluted and deaf hearts, that we may be cleansed from all our sins, see our true interest, hear and obey Thy gracious voice, and arise to newness of life; and then do Thou open our lips, that our mouth may show forth Thy praise."—*Bragge.* ¶ *Talitha-cumi.* These were the very words which came from the Saviour's lips. They are Syriac. St. Mark gives them doubtless as having peculiar solemnity, as he does in another case; *Ephphatha.* See vii. 34.

43. *No man should know it.* For the time; until His own resurrection should show them the meaning of His acts. Jesus recalled three persons from the dead: this maiden, the widow's son, and Lazarus. The three miracles rise in a climax. Here the soul has just left

CHAPTER VI.

AND he went [a]out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him.

2 And when the sabbath-day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing [b]*him* were astonished, saying, From whence hath this *man* these things? and what wisdom *is* this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?

3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.

4 But Jesus said unto them, [c]A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.

5 And he [d]could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed *them*.

6 And he marvelled [e]because of their unbelief.[f] And he went round about the villages teaching.

7 ¶ And he called *unto him* the twelve,[g] and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits;

8 And commanded them that they should take nothing for *their* journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no ‖money in *their* purse:

9 But *be* [h]shod with sandals; and not put on two coats.

10 And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into an house, there abide till ye depart from that place.

a Matt. 13. 54; Lu. 4. 16. *b* John 6. 42. *c* Matt. 13. 57; John 4. 44. *d* Matt 13. 58; Ch. 9. 23. *e* Is. 59. 16. *f* Matt. 9. 35; Lu. 13. 22. *g* Matt. 10. 1; Lu. 9. 1. ‖ The word signifieth *a piece of brass money, in value somewhat less than a farthing*, Matt. 10. 9; but here it is taken in general for *money*. Lu. 9. 3. *h* Acts 12. 8.

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the body. The widow's son had been longer dead, being borne out to the burial (Luke vii. 12); while death reigned supreme over Lazarus, who had already seen corruption, being "four days dead." All are steps up to the great mystery of the Resurrection of Jesus to a new life.

CHAPTER VI.

1–6. See notes, Matt. xiii. 54–58. *His own country.* Nazareth.

2. *Began to teach in the synagogue.* Prophets could do this, or any good men, who were able to instruct. The powers of the priesthood could not be infringed by any out of the tribe of Levi. Laymen may now be in a way instructors, but have no power over the Sacraments; and power which they have not themselves they cannot give to others.

7. *By two and two.* The power of Jesus divides as it flows from Him. He works alone. Next follow two and two, to divide between them the power, and to be compelled to recognize the law of mutual dependence. Next, the twelve take up the power to preach the Redemption. The seventy receive partial powers and thus on to the hosts of successors and believers. The mystical body of Jesus now contains the truth as it is in Him, and he who separates from it is severed from Him. It is an incidental lesson of this preparatory mission, that the authorities of the Church should send missionaries in such a way, that they may co-operate and sustain each other—as we see them now doing in Africa and China.

8–11. See notes, Matt. x. 9–15.

10. *There abide.* Do not wander from house to house. The laws of Eastern hospitality were strict. One

11 [a]And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, [b]shake off the dust under your feet, for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom [‖]and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

12 And they went out, and preached that men should repent.

13 And they cast out many devils, and [c]anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed *them*.

14 And [d]king Herod heard *of him*, (for his name was spread abroad,) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.

a Matt. 10. 14; Lu. 10. 10. *b* Acts 13. 51; & 18. 6. ‖ Greek, *or.* *c* Jas. 5. 14. *d* Matt. 14. 1; Lu. 9. 7.

15 [e]Others said, That it is Elias, And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets.

16 [f]But when Herod heard *thereof*, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead.

17 For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her.

18 For John had said unto Herod, [g]It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.

19 Therefore Herodias had [‖]a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not:

20 For Herod [h]feared John, knowing that he was a just man

e Matt. 16. 14; Ch. 8. 28. *f* Lu. 3. 19. *g* Lev. 18. 16; & 20. 21. ‖ Or, *an inward grudge.* *h* Matt. 14. 5; & 21. 6.

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was, that when strangers entered a village the sheik, or an old man of the tribe, should receive them and appoint them a residence while they remained. To leave this place for another was held to be unfriendly. They are charged to obey the innocent customs of the country, and not to give needless offence.

12. *Preached that men should repent.* Even as St. John the Baptist and the line of Jewish prophets had done before them. They did not as yet understand the doctrines of the Gospel in their fulness. For their ideas of the repentance which was required of the people, to make them ready for the reign of the Messiah, we should look to the prophets of the Old Testament, or to the discourse of St. John. Luke, ch. iii. 3–18. It was a repentance and return from sin and criminal acts, such as the Ninevites performed, and the Jews in several instances. This mission was to give the Jewish nation one more opportunity to turn from their sins and receive their Messiah. See 1 Kings viii. 47–48; Ezek. xiv. 6–7; Joel ii. 12–18; Jonah iii. 5–10.

13. *And anointed with oil.* The Jews seem to have used oil as a medicine to preserve the flexibility of the skin in the dry and burning samiel winds of their climate. The disciples used oil, not so much for its natural power as with a religious intention. In the same sense St. James directed its use. James v. 14. We see indications of the common law of the Church, not of extreme unction, but of prayer for the sick. We look for their cure to the mercy of God, as well as the potency of medicines. In the Apostles' hands, oil became miraculous; for it is ranked here with other miracles. Now we look for a blessing in the calling in the Elders of the Church to pray for the sick, using such medicines as are suited to the case. The Romish Church has grossly erred in choosing the letter before the spirit in this matter. "Extreme Unction is not to be counted for a Sacrament of the Gospel, having grown from the corrupt following of the Apostles." *Article XXV.*

14–20. See notes, Matt. xiv. 1–13.

and an holy, and ‖observed him: and when he had heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

21 And [c]when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birth-day[b] made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief *estates* of Galilee;

22 And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod, and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel,[c] Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give *it* thee.

23 And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give *it* thee, unto the half of my kingdom.

24 And she went forth, and said unto her[d] mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist.

25 And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me, by and by, in a charger, the head of John the Baptist.

26 And the king was [e]exceeding sorry; *yet* for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her.

27 And immediately the king sent an ‖executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison;

28 And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel; and the damsel gave it to her mother.

29 And when his disciples heard *of it*, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

30 ¶ [f]And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what

‖ Or, *kept him*, or, *saved him*. *a* Matt. 14. 6. *b* Gen. 40. 20. *c* Esther 5. 3, 6; & 7. 2. *d* Prov. 6. 24, 26. *e* Matt. 14. 9. ‖ Or, *one of his guard*. *f* Lu. 9. 10.

20. *For Herod feared John.* Herod Antipas. He appears to have been at first an amiable prince, as the world goes, but inveigled by the snares of the artful Herodias, he was unable to retrieve himself, and do that which was right. He was angry at the prophet for his boldness in denouncing his criminal mode of life; and at the same time his conscience so smote him, that he feared him. He paid him some regard; frequently sent for him out of prison, and obeyed him, in many respects, gladly. History informs us that it was by the instigation of Herodias, to obtain farther honors, that he visited Rome, and was banished by the Emperor to Gaul, where he died.

30. *Gathered themselves together.* Returned again to Jesus. They probably collected at Capernaum, and were immediately led out of the dominions of Antipas, beyond the Jordan.

31. *A desert place.* A place where there were no houses. Judea has singular facilities in its rocky and mountainous surfaces, for such retreats, even in the neighborhood of large cities. ¶ *Coming and going.* The minds of men were peculiarly excited at this juncture, by two circumstances. 1. The preaching of the Apostles. Had Jesus aspired to temporal power, they were ready to accept Him. 2. The death of St. John. The common people had esteemed him to be a true prophet, and were ripe for any measures of revenge. It was probably at this time, that our Lord plainly, by His acts, refused to assume temporal power in Galilee. See John vi. 15.

32–44. See notes, Matt. xiv. 13–21.

32. *By ship.* By a boat to the neigh-

they had done, and what they had taught.

31 And he [a]said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no [b]leisure so much as to eat.

32 And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

33 And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him.

34 [c]And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he [d]began to teach them many things.

a Matt. 14. 13. *b* Ch. 3. 20. *c* Matt. 9. 36; & 14. 14. *d* Lu. 9. 11.

35 And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time *is* far passed:

36 Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.

37 He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him,[e] Shall we go and buy two hundred[l] pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?

38 He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.

39 And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass.

e Jer. 11. 13, 22; 2 Kings 4. 43. ‖ The Roman penny is sevenpence half-penny. See Matt. 18. 28.

borhood of Bethsaida. ¶ *Privately.* Not informing the people. They, however, judging His destination by seeing the course of the vessel, go round the head of the lake and find Him.

33. *Out of all cities.* From all the towns about. The people were zealous. The commotion was general.

34. *Much people.* A great multitude. ¶ *As sheep, &c.* Ready to rush into danger. Our Lord pities them, and seeks to lead them to heavenly pastures by the word of doctrine.

35. *The time is far passed.* The hour of taking food. The disciples were not free from this human thirst for conquest. They, too, are agitated, and perchance, in this suggestion, hinted to Jesus the greatness of the multitude, and the expediency of adopting some means of providing for them.

37. *Give ye them to eat.* It was no chance word. It was to recall them to themselves, to show them the want of preparation for the schemes which they meditated. ¶ *Two hundred pennyworth.* About $30 of our money. Philip made use of the expression (John vi. 7), though it seems as if the others caught it up and put it in the form of a question. Our Saviour first showed their want of power to provide by human means, as a preparation to His opening to them spiritual treasures. The spiritual nature of His kingdom is then emphatically declared, in the miraculous feeding of the multitude; a doctrine afterwards explained to them. See John vi. 26–65. As a consequence of this disappointment of their ambitious projects, many fell away from Him. See John v. 66–71.

43. *Twelve baskets.* The grace of God flows over and beyond the wants of men. The spiritual manna knows no stint. So the Gospel ever goes beyond all that we desire or deserve, and is richer than our prayers or hopes.

45–56. See notes, Matt. xiv. 22–36.

49. *Walking on the sea.* A visible miracle to explain a profound moral. On

40 And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.

41 And when he had taken the five loaves, and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven,[a] and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave *them* to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.

42 And they did all eat, and were filled.

43 And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes.

44 And they that did eat of the loaves, were about five thousand men.

45 [b]And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before ‖unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people.

46 And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray.

47 And when[c] even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land.

48 And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would[d] have passed by them.

49 But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out.

50 (For they all saw him, and were troubled.) And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.

51 And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered.

52 For they[e] considered not *the miracle* of the loaves: [f]for their heart was hardened.

53 [g]And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore.

54 And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew him,

55 And ran through that whole

a 1 Sam. 9. 13; Matt. 26. 26. *b* Matt. 14. 22; John 6. 17. ‖ Or, *over against Bethsaida.* *c* Matt. 14. 23; John 6. 16, 17. *d* Lu. 24. 28. *e* Ch. 8. 17. 18. *f* Ch. 3. 5; & 16. 14. *g* Matt. 14. 34.

just such a stormy sea of passion were the disciples then tossing; anxious to assume the head of a turbulent multitude, and rule the wild elements of popular discord: and Peter is humbled that his ambition may be specially rebuked. In that cloudy gathering of the elements of war, his heart was neighing like a war horse for the battle. But calm, mysterious and omnipotent, the Saviour walked on the one element and controlled it as He did also in the other. Thus He curbs in the disciples, and teaches them wisdom by means of elements, compelling them to believe in His Majesty, while they with difficulty yield their carnal minds to the guidance of His will.

52. *Their heart was hardened.* Their perception of the real meaning of the former miracle was dull. It should have taught them to give up their wills to His, and to await His time. But they were plunging in their mad ambition into a stormy sea; and they could not see the truth which warned them.

54. *They knew Him.* The people living in the fertile valley of Gennesaret knew Him again. It lay around Capernaum. Jesus engages in the appro-

region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was.

56 And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that [a]they might touch, if it were but the border of his garment: and as many as touched ‖him, were made whole.

CHAPTER VII.

THEN [b]came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem.

2 And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with ‖defiled (that is to say with unwashen) hands, they found fault.

3 For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash *their* hands ‖oft, eat not, holding [c]the tradition of the elders.

4 And *when they come* from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, *as* the washing of cups, and ‖pots, and brazen vessels, and ‖tables.

5 [d]Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not

a Matt. 9. 20; Ch. 5. 27, 28; Acts 19. 12. ‖ Or, *it.* *b* Matt. 15. 1. ‖ Or, *common.* ‖ Or, *diligently:* in the original *with the fist* *up to the elbow.* Theophylact. *c* Gal. 1. 14; Col. 2. 8, 22. ‖ Sextarius is about a pint and a half. ‖ Or, *beds.* *d* Matt. 15. 2.

priate work of healing the sicknesses of men, to give the disciples opportunity to recover.

56. *The border of His garment.* See note, Matt. ix. 20.

CHAPTER VII.

1–23. See notes, Matt. xv. 1–20.

1. *Came from Jerusalem.* The Pharisees had made an attack upon Him in Jerusalem when He was present at the Feast of the Passover, and had failed. See John vii. 1. They now send their agents after Him, to collect evidence, that they may work His destruction.

2. *With defiled, that is to say, with unwashen hands.* St. Mark writing for the Gentiles, who were not familiar with Jewish customs, inserts such explanations as this, to prevent misconception. He explains the custom of the Pharisees and their scrupulousness in the matter of washings. The word *defiled,* does not mean simply *filthy,* but defiled by touch of some unclean person, as a Gentile or a person not scrupulous in observing the ceremonial law.

3. *Except they wash their hands oft.* This the margin corrects by saying *up to the elbow.* The little word in Greek which seems to have such different meanings, is made doubtful now, by a variety of spelling. The root of the two words in the original is the same. And the learned have so equally sustained both readings that we may well leave it, as our English Bible does, to the choice of the reader. The Pharisees certainly washed *often,* and there is good reason to suppose that they ascribed some importance to the mode of it—that it be to the wrist or *forearm* below the elbow. The custom of the Moslem Arabs, as described by Bp. Wainwright, is perhaps as good an explanation of the ancient manner as we can have. "The pilgrims kneeling down, took sand in the palms of their hands, and lifting up the arm, let it glide down the inner part of the elbow, and then went through the form of washing the face with the sand. Upon asking our dragoman, who was a Muslim, the meaning of this, he told me that it was a substitute for that washing of the hands and face which is required by the Koran as a preparation for prayer. When water cannot be procured, ablution may be performed with sand or

thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?

6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, [a]This people honoureth me with *their* lips, but their heart is far from me.

7 Howbeit, in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.

8 For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, *as* the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.

9 And he said unto them, Full well ye [‖]reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

10 For Moses said, [b]Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, [c]let him die the death:

11 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is* [d]Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free.*

12 And ye suffer him no more to do aught for his father or his mother;

13 Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

14 ¶ And when he had called all the people *unto him*, he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one *of you*, and [e]understand.

15 There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him, can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man.

16 If [f]any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

[g]17 And when he was entered

a Is. 20. 13; Matt. 15. 8. ‖ Or, *frustrate.*
b Ex. 20. 12; Deut. 5. 16. *c* Ex. 21. 17; Lev. 20. 9; Prov. 20. 20. *d* Matt. 15. 5; & 23. 18. *e* Prov. 8. 5; Acts 8. 30. *f* Matt. 11. 15. *g* Matt. 15. 15, &c.

dust." ¶ *The tradition.* The custom handed down from their forefathers. They did not pretend to found the necessity of it on the written Scripture. ¶ *The elders.* Their ancestors or perhaps the Rabbis who had lived before them. They pretended that there had always been a certain unwritten tradition, coming down in the hands of certain men in each generation.

4. *From the market.* Any public square or place where people assembled in common, for trade or any kind of business. ¶ *Cups.* Drinking vessels, such as were used at their meals. *Pots* were larger vessels made to hold liquids. Articles of metal, were sometimes passed through the fire, to remove any defilement, which might have been left by the touch of a Gentile finger. ¶ *Tables.* The couches rather, on which they reclined at their meals. These were washed lest any unclean persons might have touched them. Lev. xv. 4. How good and pious would they have been, if they had used the same care in purifying their souls from the foul effects of grievous sins; if they had sought the inward washing which alone makes clean. "Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes." Is. i. 16. But alas, men will rather bind heavy burdens upon their bodies, will labor and toil in mere will-worship and bodily exercise which profit nothing (1 Tim. iv. 8.), than seek the only true purity—which consists in holiness of heart and integrity of life.

9. *Full well.* This was said ironically. Truly a curious spectacle did they present of men scrupulous to such a nicety in respect to a sin by

into the house from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable.

18 And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, *it* cannot defile him:

19 Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?

20 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

21 [a] For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

22 Thefts, ‖covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness;

23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

24 ¶ [b] And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know *it*: but he could not be hid.

25 For a *certain* woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet:

a Gen. 6. 5; & 8. 21; Matt. 15. 19. ‖ Or, *covetousnesses*, *wickednesses*.

b Matt. 15. 21, &c.

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touch, the mere shadow of a defilement, when their consciences were burdened by such great crimes against God, such cruelties to the poor and destitute among men. They began with the notion of their tradition being *equally binding* with the written laws of God, but they had actually proceeded by a train of self-deception, to make His laws of no effect upon their lives.

17. *The parable.* They refer to the 15th verse, which was in a manner a parable, and conveyed a spiritual truth by means of a physical circumstance, with which all are familiar. The word may signify a *difficult saying*, something that required explanation. And though this seems so plain to us, it was difficult to them. They had received their training from the Pharisees, and could not at once break away from it.

20. *That which cometh out of the man.* Simple as this whole subject seems to us now, it cost the Church some centuries of battling with heresies and sects, to bring it into belief. The philosophers of that age were inclined to place *evil in matter*, not in soul or spirit. This error of the Jews, with the fascinating mythology of the Persians, combined to spread the opinion. The first sect of heretics, the Nicolaitans, erred on this point, saying that sin was *a property of the body*. It was long before the world escaped from the false conclusions of heathen science, to see that out of the heart alone proceed the issues of life—*i. e.* the things which make one a sinner or not. Says the Venerable Bede: "Thus, then, it is not meat that makes men unclean, but wickedness, which works in us the passions that come from within. From this passage are condemned those men who suppose that thoughts are put into them by the devil, and do not arise from their own evil will. The devil may excite and help on evil thoughts, but he cannot be their author." James i. 14, 15. ¶ *Defileth the man.* That which a man invents or indulges in his heart, suffering it to proceed out into words or actions, that it is which makes his soul unclean in the sight of God. Thus the penitent David cried: "Wash me thoroughly from *mine iniquity*, and cleanse me from *my sin*." Ps. ii. 2. And in the whole of that spiritual complaint over his sin, he refutes this error of the Pharisees. See Matt. xv. 18–20.

26 (The woman was a ‖Greek, a Syrophenician by nation,) and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.

27 But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not meet to take the children's bread,[a] and to cast *it* unto the dogs.

28 And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord, [b]yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs.

29 And he said unto her, For this saying, go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter.

30 And when she was come to her house, she found [c]the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.

31 ¶ And [d]again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis.

32 And they [e]bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him.

33 And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and [f]he spit, and touched his tongue:

34 And [g]looking up to heaven,

‖ Or, *Gentile.* Is. 49. 12. *a* Matt. 7. 6; & 10. 5, 6. *b* Rom. 15. 9; Eph. 2. 12–14. *c* 1 John 3. 8. *d* Matt. 15. 29, &c. *e* Matt. 9. 32; Lu. 11. 14. *f* Ch. 8. 23; John 9. 6. *g* Ch. 6. 41; John 11. 41; & 17. 1.

22. *An evil eye.* A usual phrase to denote envy. See Matt. xx. 15.

24–30. See notes, Matt. xv. 21–28.

24. *Would have no man know it.* He was seeking to avoid the evil designs of the Pharisees, and moved about in distant places with celerity and caution. Our Saviour could have defended Himself against His enemies by Divine power, but He chose to set us this example, of avoiding dangers by a proper caution.

26. *A Greek.* According to the Jewish custom of that age, all other people than themselves were called Greeks. See Acts xix. 10; xx. 21; Rom. i. 16; ii. 9, 10. The word does not declare the country of the woman, so much as her religion.

28. *Yes, Lord: yet the dogs, &c.* How great, how noble this faith; as she knew nothing of the great truth that the Gospel was to be free to all men. She hears the prophet make this distinction of *dogs* and *children.* But she *believes* that there is a truth in the mercy of God, that lies beyond that; yea, which even the dogs witness to. They receive the children's crumbs, and compared to the power of Jesus, it is but a crumb which she asks. It will make her rich, and no one the poorer. Her argument and her faith were irresistible.

31. *Departed from the coasts.* There were coasts to this region, as it lay on the sea. But the word generally means simply the region in which the cities mentioned lay. ¶ *Decapolis.* See Matt. iv. 25. He passed around above the sources of the Jordan, and visited the region of Decapolis; and came again to the Sea of Galilee, opposite to Capernaum.

32. *Had an impediment.* The man was deaf, and stammered by a natural defect in the organs. These two evils generally go together.

32. *Took him aside from the multitude.* In only one other case did Jesus withdraw the sufferer from the multitude. See Mark viii. 23. Why this was, we have no means of knowing. It may have depended on the peculiar state of mind in which the two individuals were, and to impress on them the manner of the cure, as suitable to their spiritual state. The Greek fathers say, that it was to teach us to avoid ostentation.

he [a] sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.

35 [b] And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.

36 And [c] he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published *it;*

37 And were beyond measure astonished, saying, [d] He hath done all things well; he maketh both the deaf to hear, and [e] the dumb to speak.

a John 11. 33, 38. *b* Is. 35. 5, 6; Matt. 11. 5. *c* Ch. 5. 43.

CHAP. VIII.

IN those [f] days the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples *unto him,* and saith unto them,

2 I have [g] compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat:

3 And if I send them away fasting to their own houses, they will faint by the way: for divers of them came from far.

4 And his disciples answered him, From whence can a man

d Gen. 1. 31; Ps. 139. 14. *e* Ex. 4. 11. *f* Matt. 15. 32, &c. *g* Heb. 5. 2.

¶ *And He put His fingers, &c.* Our Lord uses signs with this man. He was deaf and could not receive instruction from words. The finger in the ear, seems as if it were meant to break down the barrier to sound; the spittle and touching of the tongue, to give virtue to his organs, from His own body. Our Lord sometimes resorted to signs in curing men. See Mark viii. 23; John ix. 6.

34. *Looking up to heaven He sighed.* He seeks aid from above by prayer. He looks beyond this miracle, to those who *will not* hear or confess His doctrine: even as He wept at the tomb of Lazarus, over His own coming death, suffered in vain for so many. Keble has written the best comment possible on this act:

"The deaf may hear the Saviour's voice,
The fetter'd tongue its chain may break;
But the *deaf heart,* the *dumb by choice,*
The laggard soul that will not wake,
The guilt that scorns to be forgiven;—
These baffle even the skill of Heaven;
In thought of these, His brows benign,
Not even in healing, cloudless shine."

¶ *Ephphatha.* This is a Syriac word, which St. Mark, for some reason, perhaps known to his first readers, saw fit to preserve.

35. *The string of his tongue.* He may have been tongue-tied. The difficulty is instantly removed, and he spake plain.

36. *Tell no man.* Any undue publishing of the miracle would betray His retreat to the Pharisees. ¶ *They published it.* They were amazed at it, and being unable to understand the reason of His charging them to be silent, they cannot refrain. Led by gratitude and admiration, they tell all whom they meet of this miracle.

37. *Beyond measure.* Exceedingly. They had never seen the like, and are amazed at a miracle done by such easy means. ¶ *He hath done all things well.* The words echo that approval of the first creation, when all was *very good.* Gen. i. 31. So in this "new creation," men recognise faintly the hand of a Divine artificer, who does all His works in a perfect manner, giving eyes where was blindness, and tongues to praise God, where was impotence and silence.

CHAPTER VIII.

1–9. See explanation of this, notes on Matt. xv. 32–39.

1. *In those days.* Soon after the miracle recorded in the last chapter.

9. *Four thousand.* The word means strictly, four thousand men. See Matt. xv. 38.

10. *Dalmanutha.* A city on the west-

satisfy these *men* with bread here in the wilderness?

5 [a]And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? and they said, Seven.

6 And he commanded the people to sit down on the ground; and he took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his disciples to set before *them;* and they did set *them* before the people.

7 And they had a few small fishes: and he [b]blessed, and commanded to set them also before *them.*

8 So they did eat,[c] and were filled:[d] and they took up of the broken *meat* that was left, seven baskets.

9 And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and he sent them away.

10 ¶ And [e]straightway he entered into a ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha.

11 And the [f]Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him.

12 And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? Verily I say unto you, There shall no sign be given unto this generation.

13 And he left them, and entering into the ship again, departed to the other side.

14 ¶ Now *the disciples* had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf.

15 And he charged them, saying, Take heed,[g] beware of the leaven[h] of the Pharisees, and *of* the leaven of Herod.

16 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* because we have no bread.

17 And when Jesus knew *it,* he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread?[i]

a Matt. 15. 34; Ch. 6. 38. *b* Matt. 14. 19; Ch. 6. 41. *c* Ps. 107. 5, 6; & 78. 25; & 146. 7. *d* 2 Kings 4. 2–7, 42–44; 1 Kings 17. 14–16.

e Matt. 15. 39. *f* Matt. 12. 38; & 16. 1, &c.; John 6. 30. *g* Lu. 12. 1; Matt. 16. 5. *h* Ex. 12. 20; Lev. 2. 11; 1 Cor. 5. 6–8. *i* Ch. 6. 52.

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tern shore of the sea of Galilee, near Madgala. See notes on Matt. xv. 39.

11—21. See notes, Matt. xvi. 1–12.

11. *Seeking of Him a sign from heaven.* Some special proof that He was Messiah. They desired to perplex Him, not to be convinced. See notes, Matt. xvi. 1.

12. *And He sighed deeply, &c.* At this exhibition of their hypocrisy. This inveterate malice gave the greatest pain to the Saviour. ¶ *No sign be given.* The original intimates the strongest mode of assertion. It was in a manner impossible that such a proof of His mission should be afforded them. For they claimed that the Messiah ought to come in a miraculous and astonishing manner, in the clouds of heaven; whereas Jesus had already come, in a natural manner, by birth from a virgin.

15. *Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees.* See Matt. xvi. 6. Their own law would have taught them that leaven had a moral application to false doctrine. Compare Ex. xii. 20; Lev. ii. 11; and 1 Cor. v. 6–8. ¶ *Of Herod.* It is *of the Sadducees,* in St. Matthew. It is supposed from this that Herod and his party were Sadducees. We may properly believe, however, that Jesus cautioned His disciples against them all, for the leaven, or opinions of all were opposed to Him. The Pharisees were

perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened?

18 Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?

19 [a]When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve.

20 And[b] when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven.

21 And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand?

22 ¶ And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a [c]blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him.

23 And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town;[d] and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw aught.

24 And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees walking.

25 After that, he put *his* hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly.

26 And he sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go into the town,[e] nor tell *it* to any in the town.

27 ¶ And [f]Jesus went out, and

a Matt. 14. 20; Ch. 6. 43; Lu. 9. 17; John 6. 13. *b* Matt. 15. 37. v. 8.

c Matt. 8. 3, 15. *d* Ch. 7. 33. *e* Matt. 8. 4; Ch. 5. 43. *f* Matt. 16. 13; Lu. 9. 18.

bigoted and corrupt; the Sadducees were heretical and formal; the Herodians, worldly and unbelieving.

22. *To Bethsaida.* See note on Matt. xi. 21. ¶ *To touch him.* In order to his cure.

23. *Led him out of the town.* See note, Matt. xi. 21. The people of Bethsaida were unworthy and careless. Says Theophylact: "He then takes out of the town the blind man who had been brought to Him, for the faith of those who brought him was not true faith." And we presume that the faith of the blind man himself, was of the same mingled character as that of his friends and associates. He takes him aside and uses means, as if to help out his unworthy faith. See ch. vii. 31–37. ¶ *Spit on his eyes.* Signs are helps to faith. So the oil used by the disciples (Mark vi. 13; James v. 14) having the appearance of a medicine, helped their faith. So the wood which Elisha (2 Kings vi. 6) made use of, and the figs which were applied to Hezekiah. Is. xxxviii. 22. Thus the use of means would help the weak faith, which a pure faith would not have required. ¶ *Saw aught.* Saw any thing.

24. *I see men as trees walking.* They seem trees in height, but men from their motion. A blind man recovering his sight at once, would be almost certain to speak in such a way. Natural objects would be confused and distorted. For he would have no idea of the distances of things from him. "There has oftentimes been traced in this healing an apt symbol of the manner in which He who is the Light of the world makes the souls that come to Him partakers of the illumination of His grace. Not all at once are the old errors and the old confusions put to flight; not all at once do they see clearly; for a while there are many remains of their old blindness, much which, for a season, still hinders their vision. They see men but as trees walking. Yet in good time Christ finishes the work which He has begun; He lays hands on them anew and they see every man clearly."—*Rev. R. C. Trench.* Says Venerable Bede: "But though by one word He could cure the man wholly, and all at once, still He cures

his disciples, into the towns of Cesarea Philippi: and by the way he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am?

28 And they answered, [a]John the Baptist: but some *say*, Elias; and others, One of the prophets.

29 And he said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him,[b] Thou art the Christ.

30 And he charged them that[c] they should tell no man of him.

31 [d]And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and *of* the chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

32 And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him.

33 But when he had turned about, and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

34 ¶ And when he had called the people *unto him* with his disciples also, he said unto them, [e]Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

35 For whosoever will save his life, [f]shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

38 [g]Whosoever therefore [h]shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

a Matt. 14. 2. *b* Matt. 16. 6; John 6. 69; & 11. 27. *c* Matt. 16. 20. *d* Matt. 16. 21; & 17. 22; Lu. 9. 22.

e Matt. 10. 38; & 16. 24; Lu. 9. 23; & 14. 27; Tit. 2. 12. *f* John 12. 25. *g* Matt. 10. 33; Lu. 9. 26; & 12. 9. *h* Rom. 1. 16; 2 Tim. 1. 8; & 2. 12.

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him by degrees, that He may show the *greatness of the blindness of man*, which can hardly, and only, as it were, step by step, be restored to light; and He exhibits to us His grace, by which He furthers each step towards perfection."

26. *The town.* Bethsaida. ¶ *Nor tell it, &c.* The report of His miracles against His will, had already compelled Him to change His place of abode more than once.

27–38. See notes, Matthew xvi. 13–28.

32. *Openly.* Plainly to the disciples. He did not use a parable, but plainly prophesied of His own death.

38. *Ashamed of me.* Confounded by the shame of My dying an ignominious death as a malefactor, cast out by the Jews and crucified by the Romans. Religion now demands humility of heart, but we are too apt to use these words in a formal, vague sense. It is honorable now to believe in the *cross*. To be ashamed of Jesus now, is to have false ideas of honor, and to refuse the meekness and lowliness of a true Christian. ¶ *This adulterous and sinful generation.* The word expresses spiritual infidelity, unbelief, and the choice of worldly and wicked motives and gains. ¶ *In the glory of the Father, &c.* Those who were ashamed of the religion of Jesus in the first ages of Christianity on account of the cross, must expect the like treatment from Him. All who refuse

CHAP. IX.

AND he said [a]unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the [b]kingdom of God come with power.

2 ¶ And [c]after six days, Jesus taketh *with him* Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves; and he was transfigured before them.

3 And his raiment became shining, exceeding [d]white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.

4 And there appeared unto them Elias, with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus.

5 And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make [e]three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

6 For he wist not [f]what to say; for they were sore afraid.

7 And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This [g] is my beloved Son: hear him.

8 And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.

9 And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.

10 And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another [h]what the rising from the dead should mean.

11 ¶ And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that [i]Elias must first come?

12 And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; [j]and how it is written of the Son of

a Matt. 16. 28; Lu. 9. 27. *b* Matt. 24. 30; & 25. 31; Lu. 22. 18. *c* Matt. 17. 1, &c.; Lu. 9. 28, &c. *d* Dan. 7. 9; Matt. 28. 3; Rev. 1. 14.

e Ps. 63. 2; 84. 10. *f* Rev. 1. 17. *g* Ps. 2. 7; 2 Pet. 1. 17. *h* 1 Cor. 15. 35. *i* Mal. 4. 5; Matt. 17. 10. *j* Ps. 22. 6; Is. 53. 2, &c.; Dan. 9. 26.

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to confess faith in Christ from whatever motive of pride or carelessness, from unwillingness to give up the pleasures or grandeur of the world, or from averseness to "renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil," will be rejected by Him at the last.

CHAPTER IX.

1. *Verily I say unto you, &c.* This verse evidently belongs to the last chapter. Some then present would live to see the glorious spread of the Gospel. See notes on Matt. xvi. 28; Luke ix. 27.

2–10. *And after six days.* See notes, Matt. xvii. 1–9.

3. *No fuller.* A man skilful in making cloths white. The robes were supernaturally white and glistening. Says Bede: "Our Saviour, then, when transfigured, did not lose the substance of real flesh, but showed forth the glory of His own or of our future resurrection; for such as He then appeared to the Apostles, He will after the judgment appear to all His elect."

6. *He wist not.* He knew not. The word is from an old Saxon word, to *wit*, i. e., to know. There was little need of his saying any thing, and this seems an excuse for his words.

11–13. *Why say, &c.* See notes, Matt. xvii. 10–13.

14–29. *And when, &c.* See notes, Matt. xvii. 14–21.

14. *Questioning with them.* Seeking to entrap and shame the disciples before the people, by asking them subtle ques-

man, that he must suffer many things, [a]and be set at nought.

13 But I say unto you, That Elias[b] is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him.

14 ¶ [c]And when he came to *his* disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them.

15 And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to *him*, saluted him.

16 And he asked the scribes, What question ye ‖with them?

17 And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit;

18 And wheresoever he taketh him, he ‖teareth him; and he foameth and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away, and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out, and they could not.

19 He answereth him, and saith, O faithless[d] generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? Bring him unto me.

20 And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed, foaming.

21 And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child.

22 And oft-times it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.

23 Jesus said unto him,[e] If thou canst believe, all things *are* possible to him that believeth.

24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said

a Lu. 23. 11; Phil. 2. 7. *b* Matt. 11. 14; & 17. 12; Lu. 1. 17. *c* Matt. 17. 14; Lu. 9. 37. ‖ Or, *among yourselves.*

‖ Or, *dasheth him.* *d* Deut. 32. 20; Ps. 78. 8; Heb. 3. 10. *e* Matt. 17. 20; Ch. 11. 23; Lu. 17. 6; John 11. 40.

tions. They were able to do much mischief in this way, unless the Spirit of grace had given the disciples wisdom to answer them. The twelve were themselves as yet very unlearned and unskilful in the doctrines of the Gospel.

15. *Were greatly amazed.* They had been troubled at the failure of the disciples, and rejoice to see Jesus among them again. Perhaps some of that radiance of the Transfiguration lingered in His countenance as its reflection once did in that of Moses (Ex. xxxiv. 29), and they wonder at it. ¶ *Saluted Him.* Paid Him honor as a distinguished person, by words and gestures of respect.

16. *What question ye?* An inquiry with something of rebuke in its tone. "What have ye ventured to ask them in My absence? Ask it again, that I may answer."

17. *A dumb spirit.* The man was deaf and dumb, and a lunatic, that is, subject to periodic fits of violence. See Matt. xvii. 15. See notes, Matt. iv. 24.

18. *And whensoever.* Indeed there seems to have been malice in the choice of places, the fiend taking advantage of the most dangerous. ¶ *He teareth him.* Convulses him with gripes and twitchings as if seeking to tear his limbs apart. ¶ *He foameth.* In violent convulsions. Of course these would now be thought signs of only a physical malady. But the Scripture shows us that they were then more—the motions of evil spirits. ¶ *He pineth away.* Becomes thin and weak, as if ready to die.

23. *If thou canst do any thing.* The

with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.

25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, *Thou* dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him,and enter no more into him.

26 And *the spirit* cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead.

27 But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.

28 And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out?

29 And he said unto them,

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poor father's faith was strained, as a thin cable in the tossings of a stormy sea. All is cast on one venture. Should he be compelled to go back to his house with this terrible calamity, incurable, hopeless; to pass long days or years of this misery, with a child so horribly afflicted, yet so dear? Pause and imagine the picture of that man's home; of the agony of that his prayer. Parent, bearing an erring child in the arms of prayer to Jesus, pray on. You cannot be more wretched than he was.

23. *If thou canst believe.* Our Saviour would turn the father's thoughts back on the true source of the favor, namely *his faith.* He could have cured all diseases,—nay, prevented all sin and pain by His omnipotent power. But He did not. He cured, therefore, certain persons on condition of their *faith.* Why, but to teach men the spiritual truth that He had come to save them from sin by faith? He makes this man an example of faith. He delays the cure until this feature of it is distinctly brought out. ¶ *All things are possible to him that believeth.* Rightly understood, what can be more blessed to us in all our wants and trials than this sentence? The man and his son have both turned to dust. But this one sentence, written in the living symbols of their sufferings; commented on and illustrated by the beating, trembling heart of that parent, lives on, a loadstar to many a soul tossed in the dark upon stormy waves of doubt. Oh, poor soul, whoever you may be, a mother agonized by an unworthy child, a man sinking in the struggles of business, a poor servant or slave longing for rest and solace, pray on. Dark and gloomy as the trouble may be, pray on. All things, peace, hope, love, and holy works, nay heaven itself, all are possible *to him that believeth.* Gal. v. 6; Rom. viii. 35, 38, 39.

24. *Said with tears.* His sorrow brimmed and ran over. His heart was wrung with agony; had been desolate with doubt. It sees the merciful intention of Christ in His words, and, moved to its depths, rushes to his lips and eyes in his eagerness. His faith as well as his previous sorrow is seen in his tears. Like dew-drops they mark the link between the night and morning, the storm and the peace. ¶ *I believe.* "I trust you; I feel the love which prepares to bless me. I catch a glimpse of the spiritual mercy that has moved you to pity my sorrow. Yet, oh, let it not delay you that I am weak. *Help Thou mine unbelief.* Let *me* not be the obstacle to my son's cure. But help me to see and believe in Thy mercy, and blessed by it in this, to see farther into the mystery of Thy love." We sometimes lose something of the force of Scripture, by forgetting the *humanity;* we mean,human soul and heart of Jesus. He *felt as a man.* As a man, the tears, the simple earnestness, the prayer of this parent moved Him; and being moved Himself, His love played in His features and touched with its electric spark the man in trouble. Martha's sorrow for Lazarus was measured. Jesus consoled her by words of wisdom. Mary's love was unaffected and overwhelming. Jesus said nought to her, but *wept with her.* So in the judgment day, He will show to His saints the

This kind can come forth by nothing, but by[a] prayer and fasting.

30 ¶ And they[b] departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know *it*.

31 For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.

32 But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him.

33 ¶ And [c]he came to Capernaum: and being in the house, he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?

a Eph. 6. 18; 1 Cor. 9. 27. *b* Matt. 17. 22, &c.; Lu. 9. 44, &c. *c* Matt. 18. 1; Lu. 9. 46; & 22. 24.

34 But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who *should be* the greatest.

35 And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If [d]any man desire to be first, *the same* shall be last of all, and servant of all.

36 And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them; and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them,

37 Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: [e]and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.

38 ¶ And [f]John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one cast-

d Matt. 20. 26, 27; Ch. 10. 43. *e* Matt. 10. 40; Lu. 9. 48. *f* Num. 11. 28; Lu. 9. 49.

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infinite beauty of the Divine union of the Godhead and the manhood—ravishing them with a love, which, even after all that has been revealed to us, is as yet unsuspected by our world-darkened hearts. Rom. xi. 33; 1 Cor. ii. 9.

30–33. See Matt. xvii. 22, 23. *Would not that any man should know it.* He was on His way to Jerusalem to the Feast of Pentecost, and it was necessary to pass thither unknown, lest His enemies should seek to destroy Him.

32. *They understood not.* Certainly no language could be plainer. But their minds were so engrossed with other thoughts of His future glory and their own, that they could not believe this to be true, and in that sense, could not understand it.

33–37. See notes on Matt. xviii. 1–5.

34. *Who should be greatest.* St. Matthew says "in the kingdom of heaven." That is, in temporal power in that kingdom of earth, which they dreamed of, and like children began already to portion off among themselves.

38–41. *One casting out devils in Thy name.* This was some Jew,—possibly a disciple of St. John the Baptist—who was making use of the name of the Messiah. This was attempted afterwards by certain "vagabond Jews." Acts xix. 13, &c. It was consistent with the Divine plan of our Saviour's life that some should be allowed to do good in His name, even though they had not at the time, faith to follow Him. The news of His power and mission would spread the more by their means. ¶ *Forbid him not.* Do not discourage such in the present state of things, who show true power in My name, for they must be friendly, and will not easily be induced to do any thing against Me. ¶ *Can lightly speak evil of Me.* Lightly or quickly. A false inference has been drawn from this precept: that we ought to sympathize with and encourage all sects of Christians, because they claim the name of Jesus, and seem to be doing good. This error may be shown briefly by four reasons among others. 1. That the act was allowed in the time of preparation before the death of Jesus, when

ing out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us; and we forbade him, because he followeth not us.

39 But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can [a]lightly speak evil of me.

40 For he [b]that is not against us, is on our part.

41 For [c]whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.

42 And [d]whosoever shall offend one of *these* little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.

43 And [e]if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

44 Where their [f]worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

45 And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

a 1 Cor. 12. 3. *b* Matt. 12. 30. *c* Matt. 10. 42. *d* Matt. 18. 6; Lu. 17. 1.

e Deut. 13. 6–9; Matt. 5. 29; & 18. 8. ‖ Or, *cause thee to offend;* & so v. 45, 47. *f* Is. 66. 24.

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the Church was not yet ordered nor a lawful ministry appointed. The disciples were still Jews. None were commanded to *follow Jesus*, but a certain few whom He chose. Some therefore might be His friends, as for instance, Joseph of Arimathea, Zacchæus, Lazarus and Nicodemus; who did not follow Him. But after the day of Pentecost all this was changed. Those baptized with John's baptism were baptized again (Acts xix. 2–4); and those who then attempted to cast out evil spirits, were rendered contemptible. Acts xix 13. Those preaching the things of the Lord were instructed and baptized into the Church. Acts xviii. 24–28. 2. The precept must be confined to this particular case, of "those who shall *do a miracle*" in the name of Christ. St. Paul was such an one. He worked miracles and prophesied. Yet, although St. Paul preached, he was so tender of the unity of the Church in the original twelve, that *he baptized but a few persons.* 1 Cor. i. 14–16. Persons and sects founding new modes of ruling the church, should claim miraculous power, in order to compel us to give them sufferance under this precept of our Lord. 3. Although these words may be capable of such an interpretation, we are still bound to interpret them *by the whole tenor of the New Testament.* No one can take a single verse and make his own meaning of it and call it the meaning of the Scripture. We guide our ideas and practices by the whole of Scripture, and its tenor is clear and decided, that we must not countenance those who cause schisms and sects in the Church. Eph. iv. 3, 6; 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13, 25, 27; i. 10, 2 John 10, 11; 1 Tim. i. 18–20; 2 Tim. iv. 3. 4. It is a vain plea that any particular sect is a good sect, because it now seems to be doing good. Years will tell another story. Every branch which God has not planted will be rooted up. Disorder, variance, worldliness, unbelief, show the marks of crumbling and ruin.

41. *Whosoever will give you a cup, &c.* In the hot dry climate of Palestine, where springs were few, and far apart, it was an act of hospitality to do this. Water was precious and often an invaluable refreshment. Our Saviour in this promise rewards: 1. Those in all times

46 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

47 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee, to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes, to be cast into hell-fire:

48 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

a Lev. 2. 13; Ezek. 43. 24.

49 For every one shall be salted with fire, [a]and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.

50 Salt [b]*is* good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? [c]Have salt in yourselves, and have [d]peace one with another.

b Matt. 5. 13; Lu. 14. 34. *c* Eph. 4. 29; Col. 4. 6. *d* Rom. 12. 18; & 14. 19; 2 Cor. 13. 11; Heb. 12. 14.

who shall do good to Christians in His name, and with a desire to honor Him—a reward proportioned to their faith. If that is good, a spiritual blessing: if not, such as may be proper. 2. But especially He promises a reward to those who would give refreshment to His Apostles, when to do so was an act of courage and faith. Such was the act of Rahab to the spies. Josh. ii.; Heb. xi. 31; of Obadiah to the prophets. 1 Kings xviii. 4.

42–50. See Matt. xviii. 7–9.

44, 46. *Their worm dieth not.* The allusion is evidently made to the worms which preyed upon the carcasses cast into the valley of Hinnom. By images derived from thence our Lord described the agonies of hell. Bodies of malefactors and others were left there to decay, and the worms eat them. From this circumstance, was drawn the image of a worm which never died. A fire was kept constantly burning in the valley. The people could be naturally instructed of a fire which should never go out; never cease to consume the wicked. The worm then may symbolize the torture of conscience which wakes and stirs in the endless agonies of remorse. And the fire represents the external punishment of the body. St. Augustine thus comments: "All those who hesitate not to affirm, that there will be pain both of body and soul in that punishment, affirm that the body is burnt by the fire. But although this is more credible; because it is absurd, that there, either the pains of body or soul should be wanting, still I think it is easier to say that both belong to the body, than that neither; and therefore it seems to me that Holy Scripture is silent in this place about the pains of the soul, because it follows that the soul also is tortured in the pains of the body."

49. *For every one shall be salted with fire.* This is a difficult passage. We have two good interpretations offered by learned men, either of which may be the true one. It may be referred directly back to the wicked who are spoken of in the preceding verses. So says Dr. Lightfoot. "*Every wicked man shall be salted or seasoned with fire itself,* so as to become unconsumable, and shall endure for ever to be tormented." With him seems to agree Drs. Whitby and S. Clarke. Another opinion is thus stated by Bp. Mann: "In the present state of things he that will offer himself to the service of God must expect to fall a sacrifice to the fire of persecution. As therefore every sacrifice is first prepared with salt before it is consumed by fire, so ye must first hold yourselves prepared by the salt of a spiritual life, to sacrifice all the honors and advantages of the world." We add the opinion of Dr. Hammond, which seems to combine the two preceding. "For every apostate or temporary Christian, every wicked man, that by the temptations of the flesh fore-mentioned is taken off from the Christian course, shall (like a burnt offering) be consumed with fire; but every pious man will preserve himself pure from all evil affections, as the sacrifice is by salt from all putrefaction." Practically, it teaches us that we are to abstain from sin and expel the lusts of the flesh at every cost and self-denial, so that we may preserve the purity and holiness, which will make us

CHAPTER X.

AND he [a]arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judea, by the farther side of Jordan, and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again.

2 ¶ And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away *his* wife? tempting him.

3 And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?

4 And they said, Moses suffered to write [b]a bill of divorcement, and to put *her* away.

5 And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote you this precept:

6 But from the beginning of the creation, [c]God made them male and female.

7 For this [d]cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;

8 And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.

9 What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

10 And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same *matter*.

11 And [e]he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.

12 And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be mar-

a Matt. 19. 1; John 10. 40; & 11. 7. *b* Deut. 24. 1; Matt. 5. 31; & 19. 7. *c* Gen. 1. 27; & 5. 2. *d* Gen. 2. 24; 1 Cor. 6. 16; Eph. 5. 31. *e* Matt. 5. 32; & 19. 9; Lu. 16. 18; Rom. 7. 3; 1 Cor. 7. 10, 11.

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fit to see God; that as the carnal sacrifices of the Jews were offered to God by fire (and in a sense purified for His acceptance by fire), so are Christians, who are His *spiritual sacrifice*, to be purified for His presence by a strict and close abscision of every thing which defileth according to the Apostle. 1 Cor. iii. 13, 14.

50. *Salt is good.* See notes, Matt. v. 13. ¶ *Have salt in yourselves.* Salt is an emblem of internal purity. *To have salt in ourselves* is to aim at spiritual soundness, by cutting off sins; yet having by grace the vigorous, life which will heal up the wounds and keep the soul from morbid and melancholy repinings. "Be sound and healthy, able to cut off excrescences, and with a full vigorous life within, to recover and become stronger to work righteousness." ¶ *And have peace.* Salt in the East was an emblem also of amity. It was set before the stranger to assure him of peace. And the man who is in spiritual health seeks peace with the pure, and remains in the unity of the Church.

CHAPTER X.

1–12. See notes on Matt. xix. 1–12.

11. *Shall put away his wife.* Although no exception is made here (nor by St. Luke ch. xvi. 18, nor St. Paul 1 Cor. vii. 10, 11), yet we are to understand by necessity the one stated by St. Matthew both in ch. v. 32 and ch. xix 9, "Except it be for fornication." For this reason, a man may put away his wife.

12. *If a woman shall put away her husband.* This was not allowed by the law of Moses, nor has it become a general custom; since man, being the stronger party, has generally denied any such right. Yet Josephus informs us of a notorious case which had in a manner introduced it among the Jews. Salome, the sister of Herod the Great, sent a bill of divorce to her husband, and married Herod. This base act of a woman in power had found imitators.

ried to another, she committeth adultery.

13 ¶ [a]And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and *his* disciples rebuked those that brought *them*.

14 But when Jesus saw *it*, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: [b]for of such is the kingdom of God.

15 Verily I say unto you,

a Matt. 19. 13; Lu. 18. 15. *b* 1 Cor. 14. 20; 1 Pet. 2. 2.

[c]Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

16 And he took them up in his arms, put *his* hands upon them, and blessed them.

17 ¶ [d]And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

18 And Jesus said unto him,

c Matt. 18. 3. *d* Matt. 19. 16, &c.; Lu. 18. 18, &c.

Our Saviour therefore condemns it, in order that no one calling himself a Christian might have a doubt upon the subject.

13–16. See notes on Matthew xix. 13–15.

13. *Should touch them.* Lay His hands upon them with prayer. The Lord did this in imitation of the custom of the saints of the Old Testament (Gen. xlviii. 14): and to leave on record, by a striking instance, that which was to be the law of His Church in regard to infants. They are of course capable of a blessing at the hands of Christ, and that too a spiritual blessing. These children were in covenant with God by their membership with the Jewish Church. ¶ *Rebuked those that brought them.* Forbid them with some indignation. The disciples could not see the propriety of this act, nor of what use infants could be in that temporal kingdom of which they dreamed. It is evident, therefore, that the mothers did not desire any act of healing to their little ones. They sought a blessing of another sort; and this seemed to the twelve, an improper request.

14. *Was much displeased.* Displeasure in the breast of our Lord was a transient feeling against acts like this of ambitious and carnal minds. He was grieved that the disciples cherished such wrong opinions; displeased that they should rebuke the affection of the simple-hearted parents. ¶ *Of such is the kingdom, &c.* Of such is the Church. It has room for children. No words could more plainly teach us to baptize infants; and to consider them when baptized, as heirs to the graces which belong to the rite.

15. *Whosoever shall not receive.* No one can receive the Church covenant and be a true Christian spiritually, unless he receives the rite of admission in the humble and docile spirit of a child. If he does not receive it in humility, he puts the bar of self-will in the way. It must be removed by penitence and prayer, that the blessing of regeneration may live in his heart. Acts viii. 22. ¶ *The kingdom of God.* "The Church of Christ, into which they who are admitted, are entitled, if they observe His precepts, to eternal life in the world to come; to enter into the kingdom of God is to be a true disciple of Jesus Christ."—*Dr. Jortin.* See Matt. iii. 2.

16. *Blessed them.* Prayed for them, and pronounced an authoritative blessing upon them. The custom of the Church has been in all ages to bless little children in the name, and in imitation of the example, of Christ. Harsh and bitter would the Christian Church be if she did not do this. We know, that children by nature are born in sin, that they commit many actual sins, that they are naturally prone to sin—in

Why callest thou me good? *there is* none good, but one, *that is* God.

19 Thou [a]knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.

20 And he answered and said unto him, Master,[b] all these have I observed from my youth.

a Ex. 20; Rom. 13. 9.

b Rom. 7. 9; Phil. 3. 6.

moral confusion and wretchedness, "far gone from righteousness." We know, too, that during the first years of life the most important opportunities for forming in them principles and rules of conduct are afforded; that youth is the seed-time of life. We know, moreover, that no one can form right principles, or do truly good actions, unless the Spirit of God has regenerated him. Now, with these three premises, how shall we hesitate in regard to the conclusion? What idea would we form of Jesus, if He allowed children to pass this important period without the power and possibility of their having the Spirit to balance original sin in them, and to give them a power to do right? Does the shepherd drive his lambs out into the wilderness until they are grown? Does the gardener leave his young plants and trees in the pasture, to be browsed on by the cattle until they are full-grown trees? Does the mother cast out her infant to the street, till it is able to take care of itself? Did Jehovah exclude the little ones of the patriarchs? of the Jews from a share of his blessing? No—a thousand times no! Then, shall the fold, the nursery, the family, the covenant of Christ be less merciful than those of men? Nay, shall it be called by such names, and be utterly wanting in that which all these names teach; the power to receive, and guard, and cherish the little children? Surely not. Children unbaptized are heathen: amiable, it may be, but amiable outcasts of the flock. Nature rejects the false notion of those, who, without the excuse of ignorance, which the disciples had, will not suffer little children to take part in the blessing of the family of Christ; of men who in the ark of safety themselves, think to honor God, by seeing their little ones struggling unaided in the wild waves without. Our Church is happy, that she has never even generated the race, who have conceived this erroneous notion.

17–31. See notes on Matt. xix. 16–30.

17. *Gone forth.* Our Saviour was moving toward Jerusalem, probably to attend the Feast of the Dedication which took place in December. ¶ *Running.* He may have been searching for Jesus. It was not easy at this time to know exactly where to find Him, as He concealed Himself from His enemies. Seeing Him pass, the young man felt that there was no time to lose, and hastened after Him.

19. *Defraud not.* Deprive none of their just dues. This seems to be the essence of the two commandments against stealing and covetousness. Our Saviour does not state the Commandments exactly as they stand; but sums up the heads of them in a general way, just as any one would naturally do in conversation. 'The whole sum of the laws,' said He, 'are, as you know, the way of safety according to the Scripture.'

21. *Jesus loved him.* Approving this regard to the laws of the Scripture, He loved him. There were good men under the Old Testament who observed the laws of God by grace; and according to their strength were holy before Him. This young man had accomplished something, but was wanting in the grace to penetrate the spirit of the law. He had been somewhat corrupted by the false teachings of the age, as his question shows; and his heart was hardened by the power of riches, and something of spiritual pride. He had not the spiritual insight to prefer the truth, when he saw it, before his position and wealth. Had he been poor

21 Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, [c]One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have [b]treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

22 And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

23 ¶ And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they [c]that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

24 And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

26 And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?

27 And Jesus looking upon them, saith, With men *it is* impossible, but not with God: [d]for with God all things are possible.

28 ¶ Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.

29 And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,

30 But he shall [e]receive an

a Jas. 2. 10. *b* Matt. 6. 19, 20; Lu. 12. 33; & 16. 9. *c* Job 31. 24; Ps. 52. 7; & 62. 10; 1 Tim. 6. 17; Rev. 3. 17. *d* Jer. 22. 17; Matt. 19. 26. Lu. 1. 37. *e* 2 Chron. 25. 9; Lu. 18. 30.

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and in trouble then, the world would hardly have succeeded in tempting him away from Jesus.

22. *Went away grieved.* He perceived the truth of the words of this prophet, felt his duty and saw his previous self-deceit. He cannot give up all the charms that his position as a wealthy and pious Jew, gives him, and sacrifice all to take an unknown life with Jesus. Seldom in this day does any one fill his position in all its circumstances, and find himself compelled to choose once for all, between the world and piety. But too many are weakly yielding in the same manner; by deferring the questions of piety, and seeking the excitements and follies of worldly or wicked society.

24. *How hard it is for them that trust in riches.* Had this young man been poor when the Saviour put before him that opportunity of following him, of being a thirteenth disciple, a future Paul, or at least to fill the place of Judas, he would with all his excellent and amiable qualities have been almost sure to have embraced it. But his wealth, his worldly honors, the distinctions that pious Judaism had conferred upon him, were all too bright to be given up.

26. *Out of measure.* Beyond measure; excessively astonished. For how then could He expect to succeed and establish that glorious temporal kingdom—if the rich were to find it so hard to enter into it.

30. *An hundredfold.* A hundred times as much of satisfaction even in the midst of persecutions, as all that he gave up would have brought him. ¶ *In this time.* During this life. ¶ *Houses.* This can hardly be taken literally, although it may be noticed that the words all imply certain family

hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come, eternal life.

31 But [a]many *that are* first shall be last; and the last first.

32 ¶ And [b]they were in the way, going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid.[c] And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him.

33 *Saying*, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles;

34 And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him; and the third day he shall rise again.

35 ¶ [d]And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldst do for us whatsoever we shall desire.

a Matt. 19. 30; & 20. 16; Lu. 13. 30.
b Matt. 20. 17; Lu. 18. 31.
c Ch. 8. 31; & 9. 31; Lu. 9. 22; & 18. 31.
d Matt. 20. 20.

relations, which fitly describe those bonds of Christian love which reward the true believer. Houses may have the force which it has in the common Turkish salutation, "How is your house?" *i. e.* your family. A Christian, no matter how he may suffer, shall *here* receive a compensation in the increased love of his Christian brethren. See the missionary. In a manner he gives up all the relations of life for Christ's sake, and to spread His name among the heathen. How readily do the sympathies of "families, brethren, sisters and mothers" in the Church flow out to cheer him, and make him feel, that he has gained by the change. ¶ *With persecutions.* Kindly and gently does Jesus cool down these carnal dreams of the disciples. They catch at the sound of houses and honors; but the word *persecutions* again sets them to pondering what is the fate before them, at one time so glorious, at another with such words of sadness. We wonder at them, but we have no right to do so. We, too, have dreams, yea, dreams as Christians, which are never to be fulfilled. Our future, as we would have it, and as God has ordered it—Reader, how sadly different would it seem now. Saul of Tarsus dreamed of the tiara of the high priest, at least of honor and glory in the service of the Law. Paul died in the circus to make a Roman holiday! So with us in a measure. Reward with sorrow, inner purity with bitter tears, peace with sighs and groans, hope of heaven with crucifixion to this world—such is life. Only be faithful, and you will yet stand on the heights of a holy life, to wonder how different, yet how infinitely better, God's plan of your life is than your own.

32–34. See the notes on Matt. xx. 17–19.

32. *Jesus went before them.* They see something of His meaning. And as He had been telling them *of trouble to be met*, He takes the lead. They feel oppressed by the sense of some great danger. And now they are amazed to see Him exposing himself to the observation of men. He had been concealing Himself. But now the hour draws near, and He throws off all reserve and appears among the crowds who are thronging toward Jerusalem.

35–45. See notes on Matt. xx. 20–28.

35. *And James and John.* Their mother spake for them. They came with her. There was both ambition and affection in this request, ambition for

36 And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you?

37 They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory.

38 But Jesus said unto them, Ye [c]know not what ye ask; can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

39 And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye [b]shall indeed drink of the cup[c] that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized.

40 But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand, is not mine to give; but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is [d]prepared.

41 And [e]when the ten heard *it*, they began to be much displeased with James and John.

42 But Jesus calleth them *to him*, and saith unto them, [f]Ye know that they which are[‖] accounted to rule over the Gentiles, exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.

a Jas. 4. 3. *b* Matt. 10. 25; John 17. 14. *c* Ch. 14. 36. *d* Matt. 25. 34; Heb. 11. 16. *e* Matt. 20. 24. *f* Lu. 22. 25. ‖ Or, *think good.*

43 But so [g]shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister:

44 And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.

45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but [h]to minister, and to give his life a [i]ransom for many.

46 ¶ And they came to [j]Jericho; and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples, and a great number of people, blind Bartimeus, the son of Timeus, sat by the highway side begging.

47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, *thou* son of David, have mercy on me.

48 And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, *Thou* son of David, have mercy on me.

49 And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called: and they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee.

50 And he, [k]casting away his

g Matt. 20. 26, 28; Ch. 9. 35; Lu. 9. 48. *h* John 13. 14; Phil. 2. 7. *i* Matt. 20. 28; 1 Tim. 2. 6; Tit. 2. 14. *j* Matt. 20. 29, &c.; Lu. 18. 35, &c. *k* Heb. 12. 1, 2.

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pre-eminence over the rest; affection, for it was a time when danger seemed to lower.

46–52. See explanation in notes on Matt. xx. 29–34.

46. *Blind Bartimeus.* The name means the son of Timaeus. St. Matthew mentions two men, and a difference as to the time. See notes, Matt xx. 29. This one was certainly well known, as we may judge from the mention of his name.

47. *That he should hold his peace.* A most astounding cry in their ears: they are shocked at it. It contained the very question at issue between Jesus and the rulers. What, a blind beggar to know more than the Scribes, to dare to put together such words and confess Jesus of Nazareth to be the Son of David, the Messiah: they try to silence him! In vain. He had used his seat as a blind beggar there under the palm trees of Jericho, to good purpose; he knew

garment, rose, and came to Jesus.

51 And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight.

52 And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; [a]thy faith hath[‖] made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

CHAPTER XI.

Passion Week—Sunday.

AND when [d]they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage, and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples,

2 And saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you: and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring *him*.

3 And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that the Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him hither.

4 And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without, in a place where two ways met; and they loose him.

5 And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt?

6 And they said unto them

a Matt. 9. 22; Ch. 5. 34. ‖ Or, *saved thee.*

b Matt. 21. 1, &c.; Lu. 19. 29, &c.; John 12. 14, &c.

that he was right, and he shouts the louder, his tremendous confession of faith, as it sounded to Jewish ears.

50. *Casting away his garment.* The looser robe which he wore. He did it to run the faster, and from a noble carelessness of all, but the one thing he needed —light. True, he was blind: but of all real truth, he had a clear, bold vision. He confesses bravely, casts off obstructions readily, runs quickly, and answers reverently yet firmly—Lord, my sight! What more can faith do? What less will it do in honest hearts?

52. *Thy faith hath made thee whole.* Yea, though it had sounded as a trumpet of war, the battle between Him and the Pharisees. Jesus sealed his confession of faith by the miracle, and of course adopted all the consequences of it. And note, that He does not charge him to be *silent*, nor send him away, but suffers him to follow, a present miracle, that said to all men—even without need of words; "I confessed Jesus to be the Messiah and He gave me sight." There is no longer any need of silence. The events of this narrative hurry to their close. ¶ *In the way.* Along the road to Jerusalem, whither all pious Jews were journeying to keep the feast.

CHAPTER XI.

PASSION WEEK—PALM SUNDAY.

March 21st.

1–11. See this passage commented on in notes on Matt. xxi. 1–16.

1. *Bethphage and Bethany.* Two small villages lying near each other, on the eastern slopes of the Mount of Olives, about two miles from Jerusalem. "Beautiful as is the site of Bethany, in the midst of fertile fields and surrounded by olive and fig trees, it is now but a mean village. Its inhabitants are a few Turks and Arabs; and there is no longer a Lazarus or a Mary to sit at the feet of Jesus. The ruined foundations of their former dweling-place are still pointed out, and in memory of this friend of Jesus, the Turks at this day call their village *Lazari*. At a short distance higher up on the right are pointed out a few miserable huts as marking the place where Bethphage stood."—*Bp. Wainwright.*

4. *Two ways met.* Cross-roads; probably a thoroughfare.

6. *Let them go.* There were two ani-

even as Jesus had commanded: and they let them go.

7 And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him; [e]and he sat upon him.

8 And many spread their garments in the way: and others cut down branches off the trees, and strewed *them* in the way.

9 And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, [b]Hosanna: Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

10 Blessed *be* the [c]kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: [d]Hosanna in the highest.

a Zech. 9. 9. *b* Ps. 118. 26. *c* Is. 9. 7; Jer. 33. 15.

11 And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when [e]he had looked round about upon all things, and now the even-tide was come, he went out unto Bethany, with the twelve.

PASSION WEEK—MONDAY.

12 ¶ And [f]on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry.

13 And seeing a fig-tree afar off, having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but [g]leaves; for the time of figs was not *yet*.

d Ps. 148. 1. *e* Zeph. 1. 12. *f* Matt. 21. 18, &c. *g* Is. 5. 7.

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mals, the colt and its dam. See Matt. xxi. 7.

11–26. See notes on Matt. xxi. 18–22.

11. *Into the temple.* Into the court of the Gentiles. ¶ *And when He had looked around about upon all.* Our Lord seems to have assumed for a brief space the investiture of royalty. His acts are those of a King. The people hail Him as such. The prophet's words as changed by St. Matthew imply the same. Compare Is. lxii. 10; and Matt. xxi. 5. Isaiah said, "Behold thy salvation cometh." St. Matthew gave the sense as applicable to the occasion: "Behold thy KING cometh." It is, then, a King who surveys His palace in this instance, and, as it were, takes possession of His Father's House. ¶ *The even-tide.* Towards evening, after the services of the temple, and before the gates were closed for the night.

12. *Monday in Passion Week.*

13. *A fig-tree afar off.* The fig-tree puts forth its fruit *before* the leaves, so that by the time the leaves are fully formed the fruit should begin to ripen. This tree was in full foliage. It seemed to promise fruit. ¶ *If haply.* If perhaps there should be figs on it. Our Lord is true to His mode of teaching the disciples. This was a symbolic action. It applied exactly to the destruction of Jerusalem, which it foreshadowed. Ezek. xvii. 24; Luke xxiii. 31. ¶ *The time of figs was not yet.* Many explanations have been offered of these words; as, that the season was unfavorable and the time of gathering figs had not come. But it is certain from all accounts that the time of eating figs was not come. Figs ripened in Judea in June; and it was now March. It was not that our Saviour expected to find figs at that season of the year, but to expose the seeming boast of the tree. The tree was false to its apparent promise. It ought to have had at the least young figs; but it had nothing which would give a hope of fruit.

14. *No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever.* Of course the only explanation of this act is in its symbolical teaching. Otherwise it is without meaning. Nay, it would be painful to us to think of it. It teaches the character and fate of the Jewish nation. On this point all are unanimous. Thus the Jews were a barren fig-tree, putting

14 And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard *it*.

15 ¶ And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves;

16 And would not suffer that any man should carry *any* vessel through the temple.

17 And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, [a]My house shall be called ‖of all nations the house of prayer? but [b]ye have made it a den of thieves.

18 [c]And the scribes and chief priests heard *it*, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because [d]all the people was astonished at his doctrine.

19 And when even was come, he went out of the city.

PASSION WEEK—TUESDAY.

20 ¶ [e]And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots.

21 And Peter calling to remembrance, saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig-tree which thou cursedst is withered away.

22 And Jesus answering, saith unto them, [f]Have faith in God.

23 For [f]verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

24 Therefore I say unto you,

a Is. 56. 7. ‖ Or, *a house of prayer for all nations.* *b* Jer. 7. 11. *c* Lu. 19. 47 *d* Matt. 7. 28; Ch. 1. 22; Lu. 4. 32.

e Matt. 21. 20, &c. ‖ Or, *have the faith of God.* *f* Matt. 17. 20; & 21. 21; Lu. 17. 6.

forth the leaves of a great and zealous profession of righteousness; claiming to bear the fruit of holiness unto God. Thus had Jesus just gone up to the temple as their King, to find if they would give Him obedience; and found no "fruit unto holiness." Thus had He now left them. Henceforth they were to be deserted by the Spirit of grace, and the protecting care of His providence, and to perish miserably, by a curse, even as the fig-tree withered away after His word.

15–19. See Matt. xxi. 12–15.

16. *Any vessel.* They should not make a convenience or thoroughfare of any part of the sacred enclosure. See Lev. xix. 30; Deut. xii. 56.

20. *Tuesday in Passion Week.*

21. *Thou cursedst.* The word of Jesus had been of the same nature as the curse pronounced upon the ground by the Creator. It had withered the tree and devoted it to destruction. Of course the same Divine power is manifested in this event as in the other. The same God, who sends His lightnings, and tempests and pestilences abroad in the world, claimed power over the fig-tree. Jesus did many miracles of mercy, and all to help and heal men. He did one miracle of punishment, to teach us to beware: and spared men, taking as His object a senseless tree.

22. *Have faith in God.* Believe in God, and see the spiritual meaning of the parable, set forth in this act. They were looking only at the withered tree; Jesus would have them look deeper, and discover that which it taught. ¶ *This mountain.* Says St. Chrysostom: "As He did not dry up the fig-tree for its own sake, but for a sign, that Jerusalem should come to destruction, in order to

What [a]things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them*, and ye shall have *them*.

25 And when ye stand praying, forgive, [b]if ye have aught against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses

26 But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive you your trespasses.

27 ¶ [c]And they come again to Jerusalem: and as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders,

28 And say unto him, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things?

29 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one ‖question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.

30 The baptism of John, was *it* from heaven, or of men? answer me.

31 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him?

32 But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: [d]for all *men* counted John, that he was a prophet indeed.

33 And they answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.

CHAPTER XII.

PASSION WEEK.—TUESDAY.

[e]AND he began to speak unto them by parables. A *certain* man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about *it*, and digged *a place for* the wine-fat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.

2 And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard.

3 And they caught *him*, and beat him, and sent *him* away empty.

4 And again he sent unto them another servant: and at him they cast stones, [f]and wounded *him* in the head, and sent *him* away shamefully handled.

5 And again he sent another:

a Matt. 7. 7; Lu. 11. 9; & 18. 1; John 14. 13; & 15. 7; & 16. 24; Is. 1. 5, 6. *b* Matt. 6. 14; Col. 3. 13. *c* Matt. 21. 23, &c.; Lu. 20. 1, &c. ‖ Or, *thing*. *d* Matt. 3. 5; & 14. 5; Ch. 6. 20. *e* Matt. 21. 33, &c.; Lu. 20. 9, &c. *f* Heb. 11. 37; Neh. 9. 30.

show His power; *in the same way*, we must also understand the promise concerning the mountain, though a removal of this sort is not impossible with God.

25. *Forgive, if ye have aught against any.* Precede your prayers by an act, or at least by the spirit of forgiveness. No temper is more directly opposed to the proper Christian spirit, nor oftener condemned in the Scripture, than an unforgiving one. See note on Matt. vi. 12,

15. A Christian in praying must not only have faith in the power of God, but he must have charity towards men. God will not commit power to any, but such as from truly forgiving tempers will be certain to use it rightly.

27–33. See notes on Matt. xxi. 23–27.

CHAPTER XII.

Tuesday in Passion Week.

1–12. See notes on Matt. xxi. 35–46.

13–17. See notes, Matt. xxii. 15–22.

and him they killed, and [a]many others; beating some, and killing some.

6 Having yet therefore one son, his well-beloved, [b]he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son.

7 But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.

8 And they took him, and killed *him*, and cast *him* [c]out of the vineyard.

9 What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? He will come and [d]destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.

10 And have ye not read this scripture; [e] The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:

11 This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

12 [f]And they sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people; for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them: and they left him, and went their way.

13 ¶ And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees, and of the Herodians, to catch him in *his* words.

14 And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not?

15 Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a ‖penny, that I may see *it*.

16 And they brought *it*. And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Cæsar's.

17 And Jesus answering, said unto them, [g]Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him.

18 ¶ Then come unto him the Sadducees, [h]which say there is no resurrection; and they asked him, saying,

19 Master, [i]Moses wrote unto us, If a man's brother die, and leave *his* wife *behind him*, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

20 Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying left no seed.

21 And the second took her, and died, neither left he any seed: and the third likewise.

22 And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also.

23 In the resurrection therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife.

a Jer. 7. 25. *b* Heb. 1. 12. *c* Heb. 13. 12. *d* Prov. 1. 24–31; Is. 5. 5–7; Dan. 9. 26. *e* Ps. 118. 22. *f* Matt. 21. 45, &c.; Lu. 20. 19, &c.

‖ Valuing of our money sevenpence halfpenny, as Matt. 22. 19. *g* Matt. 17. 25, 27; Rom. 13. 7; 1 Pet. 2. 17. *h* Acts 23. 8. *i* Deut. 25. 5.

18–27. See notes on Matt. xxii. 23–33.

25. *Are as the angels.* They do not marry and form new relations, as here

24 And Jesus answering, said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God?

25 [a]For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven.

26 And as touching the dead, that they rise; have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, [b]I *am* the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?

27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err.

28 ¶ And [c]one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?

29 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, [d]Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:

30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this *is* the first commandment.

31 And the second *is* like, *namely* this, [e]Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: there is none other commandment greater than these.

32 And the scribe said unto

a 1 Cor. 15. 42; 49. 52. *b* Ex. 3. 6. *c* Matt. 22. 34, &c.; Lu. 20. 39, &c.

d Deut. 6. 4; Lu. 10. 27. *e* Lev. 19. 18; Matt. 22. 39; Rom. 13. 9; Gal. 5. 14; Jas. 2. 8.

on earth. The law of death ceasing, the need of marriage also ends. But this by no means implies that saints in heaven cease from all those natural and innocent affections which they had here. This would be to change them totally, and to make them beings of another sort. They will love all with a pure, ineffable love; but they will still feel all the bonds of love that are capable of purification. The pious Jew is gathered to *his fathers*, Lazarus to Abraham's bosom; the tie of descent still holding them. The pious mother, wife, or child will rejoice to meet relations and friends; the pious pastor, hail with delight those to whom he has been a spiritual father.

26. *In the bush.* In the burning bush, on Mount Horeb. See Exodus iii. 6. The Jews were accustomed to this close and critical reasoning on the words of holy writ. They felt the force of arguments supported as this is. And it is a sad thing to see men now-a-days, in a dread of superstition, given to reduce the Scripture to the baldest interpretation of the letter. Ps. cxix. 18, 44, 97–104.

28–34. See explanation in notes on Matt. xxii. 34–40.

28. *One of the scribes came.* He was not of the party seeking to entrap Jesus. Our Lord answered him kindly. He approved of his straightforward conduct, and spoke of him as prepared to believe and enter His kingdom. We trust that he did so. ¶ *Which is the first commandment of all?* The Rabbis taught, that men should make sure of salvation by a strict observance of one law, that they might in this way atone for sins of ignorance and accident against other precepts. They differed as to which law should be specially observed. The scribe perplexed by their fanciful explanations, seeks a solution of his difficulty.

30. *Thou shalt love, &c.* This is the royal law, the law of liberty, the principle which fulfils the whole law in all its precepts. See James ii. 8, 12; i. 25; and Rom. xiii. 10. Upon this basis is built the Gospel-covenant. It is the Christian's Decalogue—which says to him, "*Do this and live.*" Unless we

him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; [a]and there is none other but he:

33 And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love *his* neighbor as himself, [b] is more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices.

34 And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. [c]And no man after that durst ask him *any question*.

35 ¶ And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the son of David?

36 For David himself said [d] by the Holy Ghost, [e]The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

37 David therefore himself calleth him Lord, and whence is he *then* his son? And the common people heard him gladly.

38 ¶ And he said unto them [f]in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and [g]*love* salutations in the market-places,

39 And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts:

40 [h]Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.

41 ¶ [i]And Jesus sat over

a Deut. 4. 39; Is. 45. 6, 14; & 46. 9. *b* Lam. 15. 22; Hos, 6. 6: Mic. 6. 6–8. *c* Matt. 22. 46. *d* 2 Sam. 23. 2. *e* Ps. 110. 1. *f* Ch. 4. 2. *g* Lu. 11. 43. *h* Matt. 23. 14. *i* Lu. 21. 1, &c.

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do manifest this obedience, we cannot have a good hope of salvation. 1 John iv. 8, 13, 16, 20, 21. And no faith can avail to give us one moment's comfort, but that "which worketh (that is, is perfected and made efficient) *by love*." Gal. v. 6. A stricter law, entering into and searching the very heart and spirit, binds us now. There are greater promises, graces and helps for us in the Gospel, but it is still a law.

32-34. This answer of the scribe is not recorded by St. Matthew. It is the frank confession of a true-hearted man. His associates were doubtless enraged to hear it. But he would not be deterred by them from speaking truth. ¶ *Not far from the kingdom of God.* He was in a state of mind which made it easy for him to receive the whole truth. ¶ *No man—ask Him any question.* They had endeavored by their subtle questions to disgrace Him before the people. They had failed, and had only given Him the opportunity of declaring the truths which they disliked. Foiled in this, they now betake themselves to secret plottings against Him.

35–37. See notes on Matt. xxii. 41. 46.

36. *Said by the Holy Ghost.* David was inspired by God's Holy Spirit to write the book of Psalms. He wrote them as the record of his love of God, with prophecies mingled in them of the future Messiah; and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit deepened the meaning of them, and guarded them from all error.

38. *In His doctrine.* His instruction of the common people. Jesus had won their hearts by deeds of mercy, and by a fearless declaration of the common laws of justice and mutual right. They had no such hatred against Him as the rulers, but listened with pleasure to His teachings. ¶ *Beware of the scribes.* The word is to be taken here in a general sense for the rulers and teachers of the nation; since it had become the one object of the scribes to make the whole Scripture bend to things as they

against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the [a]treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two [‖]mites, which make a farthing.

43 And he called *unto him* his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That [b]this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury.

44 For all *they* did cast in of their abundance: but she of her want did cast in all that she had, [c]*even* all her living.

CHAP. XIII.

Passion Week.—Tuesday.

AND [d]as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what

‖ *A piece of brass money.* See Matt. 10. 9. *a* 2 Kings 12. 9. ‖ It is the seventh part of one piece of that brass money. *b* 2 Cor. 8. 12. *c* Deut. 24. 6; 1 John 3. 17. *d* Matt. 24. 1, &c.; Lu. 21. 5, &c.

existed in the nation at the time. ¶ *Love to go in long clothing.* They enlarged the borders of their garments. Matt. xxiii. 5. The Saviour does not warn the people because of the long robes of the scribes, but points them out by this significant sign as men loving ease and adulation. ¶ *Salutations.* Lovers of honor from men. See Matt. xxiii. 6, 7.

40. *Which devour widows' houses.* Their means of support; their homes and possessions. They made use of their reputation for sanctity to delude widows and orphans into making them legal guardians of their property; and then defrauding them. It is hypocrisy of the most detestable kind, when one assumes the garb of piety to injure the unprotected. ¶ *For a pretence make long prayers.* The long prayers gained them reputation—the reputation they used for gain. St. Paul speaks of persons in the Christian Church who had the form of godliness, and crept into houses and led captive silly women. 2 Tim. iii. 5, 6. God punishes those who insult Him in such a way. Exod. xxii. 22–24; Is. i. 17; Mal. iii. 5.

41. *Sat over against the treasury.* The alms-chest into which the gifts of the people were cast. It was placed in the court of the women, to receive the presents of the Jews who came to worship. 2 Kings xii. 18. The gifts were used to pay for repairs and sacrifices, incense, and other things used in the holy services.

42. *Two mites.* This was the smallest coin in use among the Jews. It was of brass, and less than any coin now used among us.

43. *More than all they which, &c.* God looketh to the heart and not to the hand: and He rewards the affection and self-denial that prompts the duty, rather than the mere donation. The gifts to the temple were made to God. But all things are His. Ps. l. 8–14. How, then, can we give to Him? Evidently He only gives to us by suffering us to seem to give. He gives us another mode of praising Him, which returns at once into our own bosom.

44. *Even all her living.* Her whole means of living for that one day. She fasted from food in order that she might have something to return to God, her Maker and Preserver, for all His blessings to her. She was as poor as possible, but she made not her poverty an excuse. She could take something from herself to give to the priests, against the coming Passover. She took that which would have bought her daily bread, and, stealing humbly to the temple, she put it in. None who wish to show their gratitude to God can hesitate, after her example. Rich or poor, the best offerings are those which cost us something, which proceed from love to God.

CHAPTER XIII.

Tuesday in Passion week.

See the explanations of corresponding passages in notes on Matt. xxiv. to the end.

manner of stones, and what buildings *are here!*

2 And Jesus answering, said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? [a]there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, over against the temple, Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, asked him privately,

4 Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?

5 And Jesus answering them, began to say, [b]Take heed lest any *man* deceive you:

6 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am *Christ;* and shall deceive many.

7 And when ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for *such things* must needs be; but the end *shall* not *be* yet.

8 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be earthquakes in *divers* places, and there shall be famines, and troubles: these *are* the beginnings of [‖]sorrows.

9 ¶ [c]But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them.

10 And the gospel must first be published among all nations.

11 [d]But when they shall lead *you,* and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall

a Lu. 19. 45. *b* Jer. 29. 8; Eph. 5. 6; 1 Thes. 2. 3. ‖ The word in the original importeth *the pains of a woman in travail.*

c Matt. 10. 17, 18; & 24. 9; Rev. 2. 10. *d* Matt. 10. 19; Lu. 12. 11; & 21. 14.

1. *See what manner of stones.* They are proud of the greatness and durability of their national temple. They see no signs of decay in it, or in the system of religion which bound them to it. Josephus informs us that many of the stones used in the foundation of the area of the temple on Mount Moriah, were of remarkable size. Titus had no engines that could make the least impression on them. ¶ *What buildings.* How numerous and magnificent. Moriah was covered with a series of buildings connected with the holy place, which were used as dwellings of the priests and store-houses of offerings and treasures.

3. *On the mount of Olives, over against the temple.* Says Bp. Wainwright, writing from the spot: "On our return we crossed the summit of the mount of Olives, and had a fine view of the Dead Sea. Approaching Jerusalem, we could see the city from the very summit of the mount. We could look directly down upon Jerusalem, and upon the site of the temple, and felt the full force of the words which He addressed to His disciples, after they had said to Him, 'Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here.' The site of the temple, the whole circuit of the walls, the direction of the streets—all can be seen from this spot where 'He beheld the city and wept over it.'"

9. *Rulers and kings.* The Twelve were brought before many heathen monarchs and governors of whom we have record. Tradition informs us, that all, after many trials, perished by the violence of their enemies, except St. John. And although he died peacefully, it was after many tribulations. ¶ *A testimony against them.* To condemn them in the day of judgment, because they would not hear you.

11. *Neither do ye premeditate.* See

speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak,[a] but the Holy Ghost.

12 Now the [b]brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son: and children shall rise up against *their* parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.

13 And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but[c] he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

14 ¶ [d]But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then [e]let them that be in Judea flee to the mountains:

15 And let him that is on the house-top not go down into the house, neither enter *therein*, to take any thing out of his house:

16 And let him that is in the field not turn back again for to take up his garment.

17 [f]But wo to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

18 And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter.

19 [g]For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be.

20 And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.

21 And then, if any man shall say to you, Lo, here *is* Christ; or lo, *he is* there; believe *him* not.

22 For false Christs, and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if *it were* possible, even the elect.[h]

23 But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.

24 ¶ [i]But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light,

25 And the stars of heaven

a Acts 2. 4; & 4. 8, 31. *b* Mic. 7. 6; Matt. 10. 21; & 24. 10. *c* Dan. 12. 12; Matt. 10. 22; Rev. 2. 10.

d Matt. 24. 15; Dan. 9. 27. *e* Lu. 21. 21. *f* Lu. 21. 23; & 23. 29. *g* Dan. 9. 26; & 12. 1; Joel 2. 2. *h* 2 Pet. 3. 17. *i* Dan. 7. 10; Zeph. 1. 15.

notes, Matt. x. 19. This was specially addressed to the Apostles. They were inspired men. They were not to use the arts of heathen orators. They were simply to state the truth, not showing their own skill, but the simple *testimony to facts*. Thus the truth would triumph. Christians now may regard the spirit of this precept. They are to labor to show in all simplicity the truth, and to teach men by a plain setting forth of it, not by aiming at a reputation for learning and eloquence. ¶ *But the Holy Ghost.* The Apostles were inspired men from the great day of Pentecost, onwards. They were enabled by it to choose the truth before error, to teach the simple facts of the Gospel, in many cases to do miracles, and utter prophecies, and constantly to be the infallible guides of the people. When they wrote of the Gospel, they wrote that which was infallibly true. The gift of inspiration ceased with them, or soon after their age. The writings of the early Christians are useful as helps to their meanings, and guides in the matter, which the Epistles of the

shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.

26 [a]And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory.

27 And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

28 Now learn a parable of the fig-tree: when her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near:

29 So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, *even* at the doors.

30 Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done.

31 Heaven and earth shall pass away, [b]but my words shall not pass away.

32 ¶ But of that day and *that* hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

a Dan. 7. 13, 14; Matt. 16. 27; & 24. 30; Acts 1. 11; 1 Thes. 4. 16; 2 Thes. 1. 7, 10; Rev. 1-7. *b* Is. 40. 8.

Apostles mostly took for granted, *namely the constitution of the Church.* But no mere human writing can be put on a level with the inspired.

14. See notes on the words *abomination of desolation.* Matt. xxiv. 15.

32. *Of that day and that hour.* No created being knows the precise time of the destruction either of Jerusalem, or the world. ¶ *Neither the Son.* Unnecessary difficulty has been raised on this passage, as if it were an impossible thing that the human nature of our Saviour should be limited. We do not suppose that the humanity was so entirely merged in His ineffable union with the Divine nature, as to have become omniscient; any more than we yield to the absurdity of the Romanists that His body has the power of ubiquity, that is, of being in many places at the same time. We rejoice that a text stands out in the Scripture narrative, asserting and defending the limits of His human nature. For surely it is a quality of God only, to know all things. But our Saviour, "truly God of God" as He was, did yet claim a human soul in its integrity. The property of growing in knowledge (Luke ii. 52), and, as here, of being limited on some sides in knowledge, belonged to His human nature. Our Lord means evidently, that the hour spoken of was known to no man, to no created being as the angels; no not to Him, who in His human nature even, is above angels, the *Son of man, as man.* For it has never been dreamed by any that the Son of God, the Saviour in His divine nature, was any other than omniscient. What then was the limit of that human knowledge which once grew in Him, when as a child He increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man? We sinners cannot dream of it, save where He points it out. Here is one limit. He as man did not know this very hour, though He knew all that was in man, knew infinitely more than we can dream of. This hour was not revealed. See Acts i. 7. Certain things, the Father has put in His own power. They are not parts of the Redeemer's kingdom. They form no part of the Divine plan of salvation, which was given Him to reveal. It may pain some, who wish to shut the mouths of heretics, to see a passage like this; but let them know that Jesus at least knew all the ill-uses which would be made of it and yet allowed it. Or some may prefer to regard the Saviour as some vast thaumaturgic worker, unlike to any thing that we conceive of man. He was the Son of God. But He preserved in its full integrity the human nature, body and soul, which He took on Him

33 [a]Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.

34 *For the Son of man* is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work; and commanded the porter to watch.

35 [b]Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning:

36 Lest coming suddenly, he find you sleeping.

37 And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch.

CHAPTER XIV.

PASSION WEEK—TUESDAY.

[c]AFTER two days was *the feast of* the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests, and the scribes, sought how they might take him by craft, and put *him* to death.

2 But they said, Not on the

a Rom. 13. 11; 1 Thes. 5, 6.

b Matt. 24. 42, 44. *c* Matt. 26. 1, &c.

in the Incarnation, and one portion of that nature, was to have a knowledge differing from the Divine omniscience. "Christ here speaks of Himself as the *Son of man.*"—*Drs. Hammond, Lightfoot, Whitby, Beausobre, Rosenmueller, Shelton, Barnes, Bp. Mann, and many others.*

33. *Take ye heed, watch and pray.* These are brief, emphatic words, such as a general would use to his sentinels of a dark night, when the enemy was near. Jesus may not tell them the hour, but He charges on them that state and habit of mind, which was better than such knowledge.

34. *The porter to watch.* The porter is the one who guards the portals of a castle. It is his duty to watch. The disciples were the overseers and watchmen of the Church. If they slept, all would be lost.

35. *At even, &c.* The Jews divided their day into four parts, and also the night, beginning with sunset: even at nine, cock-crowing at three, and morning at six or day-dawn.

36. *Find you sleeping.* Find you inattentive to the spiritual duties of your charge, and careless in keeping off the evils that ruin the soul.

37. *I say unto all, Watch.* To watch is a habit of mind in relation to spiritual duties which is graphically pictured before our minds in the expressions that are used concerning it in the New Testament. 1. Of a porter guarding a castle. In the beautiful tract of Mrs. Hannah More, called Parley the Porter, this idea is made the base of an interesting allegory on the danger of admitting a single enemy into the garrison—a single sin into the soul. 1 Thess. v. 6. 2. Of shepherds guarding their flocks by night. 1 Peter v. 8. The night pictures our want of knowledge, our sluggishness, our fears, the wild beasts, the enemies that hover around us seeking whom to devour. The shepherd must be vigilant and brave, or he may lose his flock, or even his life. 3. The guard of an army. The army sleeps while the sentry wakes. It is an enemy's country. Sleep may be fatal. Great interests depend upon his wakefulness. So important is his watch, that in time of war a want of it is a capital crime. Heb. xiii. 17. These commands to watch impress upon us the duty of preparation for the coming of Christ to judge the earth.

CHAPTER XIV.

Tuesday in Passion Week.

1–11. See notes on Matt. xxvi. 1–17

1. *After two days was the feast, &c.* This marks the time to be Tuesday of Holy Week, and distinguishes this act from that mentioned by St. John xii. 1–9, which happened six days before the Passover, at the house of Lazarus. ¶ *And of unleavened bread.* For the week beginning with the Passover there was no leaven found in the house of a

feast-*day*, lest there be an uproar of the people.

3 ¶ And being in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster-box of ointment of ‖spikenard, very precious; and she brake the box, and poured *it* on his head.

4 And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made?

5 For it might have been sold for more than ‖three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her.

6 And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.

7 For ye have [a]the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always.

8 She hath done what she could: and she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.

9 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, *this* also that she hath done shall be spoken of, for a memorial of her.

PASSION WEEK—WEDNESDAY.

10 ¶ [b]And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them.

11 And when they heard *it*, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.

PASSION WEEK—THURSDAY.

12 ¶ [c]And the first day of unleavened bread, when they ‖killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that

‖ Or, *pure nard*, or *liquid nard*. ‖ See Matt. 13. 28. [a] Deut. 15. 11. [b] Matt. 26. 14, &c.; Lu. 22. 1, &c. [c] Matt. 26. 17, &c.; Lu. 22. 7. ‖ Or, *sacrificed*.

Jew. The feast came therefore to have this name.

3. *Ointment of spikenard.* This was not a medicinal salve, but a thick unguent or perfume. In that dry climate such luxuries for softening the skin were much esteemed. This precious ointment was brought from India. "Alabaster is a sort of white marble veined with various colors, which is often hollowed out for boxes of ointment, because it keeps things of that nature most incorrupt. Nard is an aromatic shrub of a large and thick root, but short, black, and brittle; though unctuous, it smells like cypress, and has a sharp taste and small and dense leaves. Its tops spread themselves out like ears of corn; therefore, its gift being double, perfumers make much use of the spikes and the leaves of the nard. This was not made of the root only of the nard, but even, what made it more precious, by the addition of the spikes and leaves, the gratefulness of its smell and virtue was augmented.—*Bede.*" ¶ *She brake the box.* After this use it was to be put to no meaner.

5. *Three hundred pence.* This was about forty-five dollars of our money.

9. *For a memorial of her.* That by which she shall be remembered and praised. There seems an allusion to the spreading of the perfume through all the house; so should the memory of the deed spread the rich perfume of her faith to all the world. The word is used in one other place in the New Testament. "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a *memorial* before God" Acts x. 4. They have ascended as a sweet odor of sacrifice. See Prov. x. 7.

10. *Wednesday in Passion Week.*

12–16. See Matt. xxvi. 17–19.

we go and prepare, that thou mayest eat the passover?

13 And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him.

14 And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the good man of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

15 And he will show you a large upper room furnished *and* prepared: there make ready for us.

16 And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

17 [a]And in the evening he cometh with the twelve.

18 And as they sat, and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me, shall betray me.

a Matt. 26. 20, &c.; Lu. 22. 14, &c.

19 And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, *Is* it I? and another *said*, *Is* it I?

20 And he answered and said unto them, *It is* one of the twelve that dippeth with me in the dish.

21 The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but wo to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born.

22 ¶ [b]And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake *it*, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body.

23 And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave *it* to them: and they all drank of it.

24 And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.

25 Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of

b Matt. 26. 26, &c.; Lu. 22. 19, &c.; John 15. 1; 1 Cor. 11. 23.

12. *Thursday in Passion Week. They killed the Passover.* On this day Jesus and His disciples killed the paschal lamb. The Pharisees kept their passover on Friday, when they unwittingly slew the true Lamb of God, of whom the paschal lambs were types. ¶ *Go and prepare.* This required them to find and arrange the room, buy a lamb, take it to the temple and slay it before the priests, and procure the bitter herbs and wine and the unleavened bread. It took them the entire day.

13. *A man bearing a pitcher of water.* The Jews of the holy city were accustomed to open their houses for their foreign brethren during this feast. But it was a proof of the infinite knowledge of Christ, that He should have given them this sign to guide them.

14. *The good man of the house.* The master of the house. He was probably some poor man, as this labor was usually performed by servants or females. ¶ *The guest-chamber.* A room provided for this purpose. It was an upper room, removed from the rest of the family.

15. *A large upper room, furnished and prepared.* This act on the part of our Saviour was one of simple acceptance of a hospitality, provided by some pious Jew or disciple, who was prepared to lend the room to some one. He had made ready the table and couches, and covered them with carpets, and willing-

the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

26 ¶ And [a]when they had sung an ‖hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

27 And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, [b]I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.

28 But [c]after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee.

29 But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet *will* not I.

30 And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, *even* in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

31 But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.

32 And [d]they came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray.

33 And he taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy;

34 And saith unto them, [e]My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.

35 And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

36 And he said, [f]Abba, Father, all things *are* [g]possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: [h]nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt.

37 And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour?

38 Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. [i]The spirit truly *is* ready, but the flesh *is* weak.

39 And again he went away, and prayed, and spake the same words.

40 And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy;) neither wist they what to answer him.

41 And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep

a Matt. 26. 30. ‖ Or, *psalm.* *b* Zech. 13. 7. *c* Ch. 16. 7. *d* Matt. 26. 36, &c.; Lu. 22. 40, &c. *e* John 12. 27.

f Rom. 8. 15; Gal. 4. 6. *g* Heb. 5. 7. *h* John 5. 30; & 6. 38. *i* Rom. 7. 23; Gal. 5. 17.

ly yielded the use of them to any who asked him. He may possibly have kept the feast the day following with the Pharisees, and thus have had no use for it on this day.

17–31. See notes on this important subject, Matt. xxvi. 20–35.

31. *More vehemently.* With more earnestness. He thought only of fighting for his Lord: and surely no leader of men to the dangers of war could have desired a braver follower.

32–42. See notes on Matt. xxvi. 36–46.

37. *Abba, Father.* Abba is a Syriac word. St. Mark, writing for the Gentiles, thought fit to add the translation. Our Saviour used but the one word, Abba.

40. *Neither wist they.* They did not know in what manner to answer Him. If they had watched with Him, the hour and scene might have opened their eyes to the spiritual character of His work.

on now, and take *your* rest; it is enough, [a]the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

42 Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.

43 ¶ [b]And immediately while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders.

44 And he that betrayed him, had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead *him* away safely.

45 And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, Master; and kissed him.

46 ¶ And they laid their hands on him, and took him.

47 And one of them that stood by, drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

a John 13. 1. *b* Matt. 26. 47, &c.; Lu. 22. 47, &c.; John 18. 3, &c.

48 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Are ye come out as against a thief, with swords and *with* staves to take me?

49 I was daily with you in the temple, teaching, and ye took me not; [c]but the scriptures must be fulfilled.

50 [d]And they all forsook him and fled.

51 And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about *his* naked *body;* and the young men laid hold on him.

52 And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked.

53 ¶ And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests, and the elders and the scribes.

54 And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

c Ps. 22. 6; Is. 53. 7, &c. *d* Ps. 88. 8.

But yielding to heaviness, they lose the hour of preparation and then desert Him.

41. *It is enough.* "Your discipleship is ended, I give you a quittance. You will see Me in human life no more. I will no more go in and out with you on earth as a man subject to death. I am now betrayed and must leave you as sheep without a shepherd." With what feelings must the disciples, especially the three chosen to be near Him in His hour of agony, have recalled this brief sentence. What might they not have done if they had watched and believed. Perhaps they might have stood by Him in His trial and death, and soothed His dying anguish by the sight of their fidelity. But besides a few women, John only was at the cross.

43–52. See notes on Matt. xxvi. 47–57.

51. *A certain young man.* The young man was dressed only in a linen garment such as is often worn by people in that region; or he may have been suddenly awakened and seized any covering in his way. The circumstance seems thrown in to show the consternation of the disciples. He leaves his only covering on a cold night, to escape. It has excited much conjecture who this person was. Some of the fathers say that it was James the less, afterwards Bishop of Jerusalem. But it is impossible to do more than conjecture. ¶ *A linen cloth.* Perhaps the same as the talith or linen cloak worn by the priests in the synagogue.

52. *Good Friday, midnight.*

PASSION WEEK.—GOOD FRIDAY.

55 [a]And the chief priests, and all the council, sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none.

56 For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.

57 And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying,

58 We heard him say, [b]I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.

59 But neither so did their witness agree together.

60 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what *is it which* these witness against thee?

61 [c]But he held his peace, and answered nothing. [d]Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

62 And Jesus said, I am: and ye [e]shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

63 Then the high priest [f]rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witness?

64 Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.

65 And some began to [g]spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophesy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.

66 ¶ [h]And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest:

67 And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.

68 [i]But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.

69 And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is *one* of them.

70 And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art *one* of them: for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth *thereto*.

71 But he began to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not this man of whom ye speak.

72 And the second time the

a Matt. 26. 59, &c. *b* Ch. 15. 29; John 2. 19. *c* Is. 53. 7. *d* Matt. 26. 63. *e* Matt. 24. 30; 26. 64; Lu. 22, 69.

f Is. 37. 1. *g* Is. 50. 6. *h* Matt. 26. 69; Lu. 22. 55; John 15. 18. *i* 2 Tim. 2. 12. *j* Acts 2. 7.

52–72. See notes on Matt. xxvi. 57–75.

72. *When he thought thereon, he wept.* Which Dr. Doddridge translates "covering his head with his mantle, he wept:" and the Vulgate; "he began to weep." The English translation is probably the true one. It is thought by some, that in the brevity of this sentence we can trace the hand of St. Peter himself, preventing his friend from adding one word that would seem to excuse him. St. Matthew and St. Luke say "he wept bitterly," while St. John, as be-

cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And [l]when he thought thereon, he [a]wept.

CHAPTER XV.

Good Friday.

AND[b] straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes, and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried *him* away, and delivered *him* to Pilate.

2 And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering, said unto him, Thou sayest *it*.

3 And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing.

4 And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee.

5 [c]But Jesus yet answered nothing, so that Pilate marvelled.

6 Now at *that* feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.

7 And there was *one* named Barabbas, *which lay* bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.

8 And the multitude crying aloud, began to desire *him to do* as he had ever done unto them.

9 But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

10 (For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him[d] for envy.)

11 But the chief priests moved the people that he should rather release[e] Barabbas unto them.

12 And Pilate answered, and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do *unto him* whom ye call the [f]King of the Jews?

13 And they cried out again, Crucify him.

14 Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.

15 ¶ And *so* Pilate,[g] willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered

‖ Or, *he wept abundantly*, or *he began to weep*. *a* 2 Cor. 7. 10. *b* Ps. 2. 2; Matt. 27. 1, &c.; Lu. 23. 1, &c.; John 18. 28, &c.; Acts 3. 13; & 4. 26.

c Is. 53. 7; John 19. 9. *d* Prov. 27. 4; Acts 13. 45; Tit. 3. 3. *e* Acts 3. 14. *f* Ps. 2. 6; Jer. 23. 5; Acts 5. 31. *g* Matt. 27. 24, &c.; Lu. 23. 23, &c.; John 19. 13, &c.

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came the equal of St. Peter in all respects, is very brief on the subject. The word *bitterly* seems to plead for him, and we would have expected something like it in St. Mark. The reader may judge for himself. It certainly was like St. Peter to refuse to justify the act, which must have wrung his lofty heart with the bitterest shame.

CHAPTER XV.

See generally the notes on the twenty-seventh chapter of St. Matthew.

16. *Called Pretorium.* A name given to a raised place in the hall of the prætor, where he sat to administer justice. When he appeared upon this place, he was upon his tribunal and prepared to administer the laws. ¶ *The whole band.* The whole band is now assembled for the protection of the governor and the prisoner.

17. *With purple.* Or scarlet. St. Matt. xxvii. 28. The two colors run into each other. This old garment was

Jesus, when he had scourged *him*, to be crucified.

16 And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Pretorium; and they called together the whole band;

17 And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his *head*,

18 And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews!

19 And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing *their* knees, worshipped him.

20 And when they had[a] mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.

21 And[b] they compel one Simon a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.

a Ps. 35. 16; Matt. 20. 19; Ch. 10. 34; Lu. 22. 63; & 23. 11. 36. *b* Matt. 27. 32; Lu. 23. 26; John 19. 17.

22 And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.

23 And they gave him to drink, wine mingled with myrrh: but he received *it* not.

24 And when they had crucified him, they[c] parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take.

25 And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.

26 And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

27 And with him they crucify two thieves, the one on his right hand, and the other on his left.

28 And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith,[d] And he was numbered with the transgressors.

29 And[e] they that passed by, railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying,[f] Ah, thou that

c Ps. 22. 18. *d* Is. 53. 12; Lu. 22. 37. *e* Ps. 22. 7. *f* Ch. 14. 58; John 2. 19.

found about the citadel, having been some robe worn by the rulers. ¶ *About His head.* A simple line of twigs of a thorny kind, put upon the head. Says Bp. Wainwright: "We saw large quantities of that thorny shrub which bears the name of *spina sancta*, from the supposition that the Saviour's crown of thorns was made from it. Its branches, with their short, angular points, armed with triple thorns, would form just such a cruel chaplet as the artist has placed upon the head of our blessed Saviour."

19. *Worshipped Him.* This mock reverence was paid to Jesus as a pretended King of the Jews. It was the sport of brutal minds, that had been hardened by their life of cruelty. See note, Matt. xviii. 26.

21. *Father of Alexander and Rufus.* These persons were probably then living at Rome, as St. Paul salutes Rufus there. Rom. xvi. 13. They were probably well known to the Christians, at the time the gospels were written.

23. *Wine mingled with myrrh.* St. Matthew calls the same vinegar. It was a cheap wine, old and soured. It was intended to stupefy Him and shorten His sufferings, and our Saviour refused it. ¶ *Myrrh.* This was a gum yielded by a thorny tree or shrub of Arabia. It had the power of deadening the nerves to pain, and when taken in any quantity was an active poison.

25. *And it was the third hour.* Nine o'clock A. M.

32. *That we may see and believe.* The idle taunt of reprobate minds, flushed with unexpected success. Doubtless they had felt strange tremors during all that morning, lest the spiritual

destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days,

30 Save thyself, and come down from the cross.

31 Likewise also the chief priests mocking, said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save.

32 Let Christ the king of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him, reviled him.

33 And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land, until the ninth hour.

34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, [a]Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

35 And some of them that stood by, when they heard *it*, said, Behold, he calleth Elias.

36 And [b]one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and [c]gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down.

37 And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

38 And the veil of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom.

39 ¶ And when the centurion which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.

40 There were also women looking on afar off, among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less, and of Joses, and Salome;

41 Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him; and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.

42 ¶ [d]And now, when the even

a Ps. 22. 1; Matt. 27. 46. *b* Matt. 27. 48; John 19. 29. *c* Ps. 69. 21.

d Matt. 27. 57, &c.; Lu. 23. 50, &c.; John 19, 38, &c.

Samson should burst His bonds and destroy them. Now they feel safe. The safety of the wicked is often like theirs —only the more fearful with coming woes.

34. *Eloi, Eloi.* St. Mark gives us the very sounds uttered by Jesus in the Syro-Chaldaic dialect, which was then spoken by the Jews. Hence he differs slightly from St. Matthew, who gives the Hebrew form of the word. Ps. xxii. 1.

42. *When the even was come.* The Greek is more general. *The evening coming on:* for after the sun had actually set, the Sabbath was then begun—a period which the Pharisees wished to anticipate. We must allow time, then, for the soldiers to visit the hill, for Joseph to see Pilate, and to remove the body to his own tomb, which, however, was only a stone's throw off from the cross. As Jesus expired at three in the afternoon, this was probably an hour or two after; or the time, according to the Jews, "between the evenings." ¶ *The preparation.* This is added for the information of the Gentiles, for whom St. Mark wrote. There were certain preparations to be made for the *high day* Sabbath following.

43. *Joseph of Arimathea, an honorable counsellor.* See notes, Matt. xxvii. 57. He was a man of distinction among the Jews, and convinced of the truth of the mission of Jesus. But this conviction he chose to keep in a manner private, for fear of the Jews. This he was al-

was come, (because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath,)

43 Joseph of Arimathea, an honorable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.

44 And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling *unto him* the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead.

45 And when he knew *it* of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.

46 And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre, which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.

47 And Mary Magdalene and [c]Mary *the mother* of Joses beheld where he was laid.

CHAPTER XVI.

Easter Even.

AND when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the *mother* of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.

Easter Day.

2 And very early in the morning, the [b]first *day* of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun:

a Matt. 27. 61; Lu. 23. 54-56.

b Matt. 28. 1, &c.; Lu. 24. 1, &c.; John 20. 1, &c.

lowed to do. Up to the time of the institution of the Church, Jesus did not require all persons to give up their avocations. Our Lord retained twelve special disciples about Him. Sometimes others followed Him. But it was not His intention during that time to call out from the nation those who believed in Him. ¶ *Went boldly in unto Pilate.* The Jews would feel enraged at any one who would intercede for a favor to one so much hated by them. His position gave him power to ask the favor of Pilate. The governor seems to have granted it willingly as soon as he learned the fact of the actual death of Jesus. Says Theophylact: "He was bold with a praiseworthy boldness, for he did not consider within himself, I shall fall from my rich estate, and I shall be expelled by the Jews if I beg for the body of Him who was condemned as a blasphemer." ¶ *Craved the body.* He asked it of Pilate.

44. *And Pilate marvelled, &c.* It was unusual for one to die so soon. Often the victim hung on the cross for many days. The death of Jesus was sudden, because of the exceeding pains which He had previously suffered. Nature was rapidly exhausted under the weight of the sins of a whole world.

45. *When he knew it of the centurion.* The centurion who commanded the band that watched the bodies was made responsible for their death. He satisfied Pilate of the fact.

47. *Beheld where He was laid.* The tomb of Joseph was near the cross The two sacred spots are still pointed out in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. The two Marys remained at the tomb overwhelmed with grief until the Sabbath began. They then retired to their homes. The other Galilean women first saw the tomb, and then hastened to the city and brought spices before sunset, to be prepared for the embalming on the first day of the next week. See Luke xxiii. 55, 56. The Marys obtained spices on the next evening, i. e., our Saturday. Thus the women were resolved into two companies. This fact explains the apparent discrepancies in the accounts of the resurrection.

3 And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

4 And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.

5 And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.

6 And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.

7 But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter, that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.

8 And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled, and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any *man;* for they were afraid.

9 ¶ Now when *Jesus* was risen early, the first *day* of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

10 *And* she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept.

11 And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.

12 ¶ After that, he appeared

CHAPTER XVI.

1–8. *Saturday, or the Jewish Sabbath. Easter even.* See notes on Matt. xxviii.

1–8. *Sweet spices.* Antiseptics, aromatic substances to resist putrefaction. They sent forth an agreeable spicy perfume when heated. It was the custom of the Jews to swathe a dead body in linen with spices. On Friday evening this had been hastily done. The women desired to accomplish it more carefully.

2. *Easter Sunday, March* 28.

4. *For it was very great.* They were in the act of saying this when, lo! they see the stone removed. The tomb was made according to the custom of the Jews. First an entrance to a small chamber; then by a door to a smaller inner room in the rock, on one side of which was a niche cut in the stone parallel to the chamber, and raised about a foot above the floor, large enough to contain a body. Usually the outer entrance was covered by a large stone to prevent the robbers or wild beasts from desecrating the tombs.

5. *A young man.* An angel in the form of a young man. The angels are spirits, and assumed forms at will when they appeared to men. He was sitting in the first chamber near the entrance.

7. *And Peter.* How tender the care of this disciple. The message is sent to him by name to cheer him and recall him from despair. He might not have dared to come, after his wicked acts of denial. But his penitence had obtained him pardon, and the angel summons him by name.

8. *Neither said they any thing.* Overwhelmed with amazement at the news, and frightened, as all men are, at the appearance of spiritual beings, they hasten away to tell the disciples.

11. *Believed not.* Could not credit it. In spite of all the prophecies which Jesus had made in their hearing of His resurrection they are unable to credit it. Their doubt was wrong and unworthy in them, but it serves for our conviction. It proves to us that they were not credulous nor easily deceived.

12. *In another form.* Whatever we are to infer from this change of form, it was certainly so complete that the

in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.

13 And they went and told *it* unto the residue: neither believed they them.

14 ¶ [a]Afterward he appeared unto the eleven, as they sat[‖] at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief, and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

15 And he said unto them, [b]Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to [c]every creature.

16 [b]He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.

a 1 Cor. 15. 5; John 20. 19. ‖ Or, *together.*
b Matt. 28. 19; John 15. 16. *c* Col. 1. 23.
d John 3. 18, 36; Acts 2. 38; & 16. 30–33; Rom. 10. 9; 1 Pet. 3. 21.

disciples did not recognize Him. ¶ *Into the country.* To Emmaus, a village eight miles to the north-west of Jerusalem. Luke xxiv. 13.

14. *Appeared unto the eleven.* Eight days after on the octave of Easter. See John xx. 26, 27. ¶ *Their unbelief, &c.* They had manifested a want of faith, in not crediting the witnesses to a fact, and in not remembering His promise. It was on this occasion that He convinced Thomas of the truth of His risen body.

15. St. Mark gives us now a brief summary of the covenant of salvation, which was to be preached by the Apostles. It is brief, but full. The New Testament is but a comment and expansion of it. ¶ *Go ye.* The act of commission, which St. John has enlarged by recording the words which explain it: "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." John xx. 21. And St. Matthew's words are emphatic, for he preludes this commission by a similar assertion of power. "All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth, *Go ye therefore.*" Matt. xxviii. 18, 19. Our Saviour must be understood as commissioning them for their future work, for St. Luke tells us that He bade them remain in Jerusalem for the "promise of the Father," even "power from on high." Luke xxiv. 49. ¶ *Into all the world.* Says St. Matthew, *Teach all nations*, equivalent to the words here, *to every creature.* The covenant of salvation is to be freely offered to all men. There is no distinction of persons. Christ died for all. All power was given Him that He might save all who believe. The offer is to be made to all. The duty of the successors of the Apostles is to offer salvation to all on these terms: to carry it to all nations, to put no bar in the way which God has not put, and to look for no rest, while one heathen lives without the hearing of the Gospel. It was long before the Apostles understood that the Gospel was destined to break over the lines of Jewish customs, and to go forth to the Gentiles in its own character and fulness. But at last they carried it to every quarter of the known world and died in distant lands for their faith. ¶ *Preach.* The word embraces all methods of witnessing to the truth or instructing men in it. The disciples began as witnesses. They related the facts of the life and death of Jesus, adding very little of their own, beyond explaining the Old Testament prophecies. In every age the form of preaching varies according to circumstances. But in all, the Church holds up to men the great doctrine of salvation by Christ. ¶ *The Gospel.* "The history of My life and death as a means of redemption and salvation, the glad tidings that man may be saved from sin and death by one perfect and sufficient sacrifice." ¶ *To every creature.* To all men, women and children. The preaching must be to every creature who can receive it, to every one who has sins to be forgiven or a soul to be saved. Thus does the Saviour allow no limit to be placed to His mercy.

16. *He that believeth. He that believes*

17 And these signs shall follow them that believe: [a]In my name shall they cast out devils; [b]they shall speak with new tongues;

18 [c]They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any

a Lu. 10. 17; Acts 5. 16; & 8. 7; & 16. 18; & 19. 12.

b Acts 2. 4; & 10. 46. & 19. 6; 1 Cor. 12. 10, 28.

c Acts 28. 5.

Me, and in Me obeys. This is faith, and every other definition short of it will be vain and unsafe. A man must first of all believe the Gospel, as a true history of Christ and redemption by Him. He must receive the articles of the Creed. And He must believe *in* them, must see that his safety can be found only in doing all that they require. ¶ *And is baptized.* This Sacrament is the act of taking up the covenant of obedience to Jesus, the only Saviour. By it men are received into a condition in which they are bound to renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil; to keep God's holy will and commandments, and do all things that are necessary to salvation. These words are cited in the office of Public Baptism of those of riper years, with the comment that they show unto us "the great benefit we reap" by baptism. The words of St. Peter (Acts ii. 38–40) follow them as also a quotation from His Epistle. 1 Pet. iii. 21. On the ground of which words we pray to God "that He will favorably receive these present persons truly repenting and coming unto Him by faith: that He will grant them remission of their sins, and bestow on them the gift of the Holy Ghost: that He will give unto them the blessing of eternal life, and make them partakers of His everlasting kingdom." They are then exhorted on their part to make two solemn promises—first, "to renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, and all covetous desires of the flesh, so as not to follow nor be led by them." Second—To "obediently keep God's holy will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the days of their life." They are then assured that they "are regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ's Church," and warned that "Baptism doth represent unto us our profession, which is to follow Christ, and to be made like unto Him; that as He died and rose again for us, so should we who are baptized, die unto sin, and rise again unto righteousness, continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living." A most sound and healthful explanation of this text. It is sometimes objected, that baptism is not as important as faith, because it is not mentioned a second time, in the last part of this verse. But how could it be? One who does not believe would not be baptized, nor indeed be saved if he was. Faith must come first, and the sacrament follow. It would have been out of place to have repeated the two words. ¶ *He that believeth not.* Who refuses to acknowledge the truth of the Gospel: or, if convinced of it, to do that which is evidently required by it.

17. *These signs.* These miraculous proofs shall accompany the first Christians. ¶ *Them that believe.* Converts to Christianity. ¶ *In My name.* By My authority, and when engaged in their works as ministers for Me. The Apostles and many others manifested great power over diseases and evil spirits. Acts. iii. 6; v. 5, 12; viii. 6, 7, &c. ¶ *Shall they cast out devils.* See note, Matt. iv. 24. ¶ *Shall speak with new tongues.* Tongues new to them, such as they had never learned. This was remarkably fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, and the same power seems to have resided for some time in the Church. 1 Cor. xii. 10. These things were in a manner necessary at first, to the effectual spread of the Gospel. It was impossible to compel men to listen and believe without these demonstrations of power. They were God's testimony going with the Christians to arrest the minds of men, and make them listen to their message.

18. *They shall take up serpents.* See Acts xxviii. 56. The ordinary poisons shall not hurt them while in the dis-

deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; [a]they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

19 ¶ So then, [b]after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and [c]sat on the right hand of God.

20 And they went forth, and

a Acts 5. 15, 16; & 9. 17; & 28. 8; Jas. 5. 14, 15. *b* Acts 1. 2, 3.

c Ps. 110. 1; Acts 7. 55.

charge of their duty. It was evidently a great help to the preaching of the Apostle St. Paul on one occasion, that he was unharmed by a viper. The people of the island were at once convinced that he was sent by the powers superior to nature. ¶ *Any deadly thing.* Any liquid poison. We have no instance of any Christian being compelled to do this; but it is likely that some of them were called on to prove the truth of this promise. ¶ *On the sick.* See examples of this, Acts iii. 6, 7; v. 15; and James v. 14. It was afterwards urged against the Christians, that these gifts had ceased, and with them the power of their commission was destroyed. On this subject, St. Gregory remarks: "Are we then without faith, because we cannot do these signs? Nay; but these things were necessary in the beginning of the Church; for the faith of believers was to be nourished by miracles, that it might increase. Thus we also, when we plant groves, pour water upon them, until we see that they have grown strong in the earth; but when once they have firmly fixed their roots, we leave off irrigating them. These signs and miracles have other things which we ought to consider more minutely. For Holy Church does every day in spirit, what then the Apostles did in body; for when her priests by the grace of exorcism, lay their hands on believers and forbid the evil spirits to dwell in their minds, what do they but cast out devils? And the faithful, who have left earthly words, and whose tongues sound forth the holy mysteries, speak a new language: they, who by their good warnings take away evil from the hearts of others, take up serpents; and when they are hearing words of pestilent persuasion, without being at all drawn aside to evil doing, they drink a deadly thing, but it will never hurt them: whenever they see their neighbors growing weak in good works, and by their good example strengthen their life, they lay their hands on the sick, that they may recover. *And all these miracles are greater in proportion as they are spiritual, and by them souls and not bodies are raised.*"

19. *He was received up into heaven.* Ascending from Olivet by the right of His risen body, over which earth had no longer any power. See Acts i. 9. How glorious must have been the scene beyond that cloud which concealed it, as He carried with Him into the abodes of celestial light, the *human nature*, the first fruits of the dead—the pledge to us, that we also shall follow Him whither He hath ascended. ¶ *On the right hand of God.* The phrase is taken from the customs of an earthly court, and serves to help our feeble ideas. God is without such a nature as ours, and the words can apply to Him only in a general way. Still they mark Heaven as a *place.* For our Lord's risen body dwells there, and being still a body, it fills some place. And that place is *Heaven*, is the more immediate presence of God, the ineffable glory. We know not where it is, but may safely bear about with us the dream of our childhood that it is *above* us. The style of Scripture which regards the moral gravitation and astronomy, more than the scientific, constantly uses the language of children, to teach us, that we are to rise in mind and heart above earthly things towards our celestial home.

20. *They went forth.* As is shown in the book of the Acts of the Apostles. ¶ *Every where.* In one age they had carried the sound of the Gospel from Britain to the Ganges, from Europe far up toward the sources of the Nile. ¶ *The*

preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and [a]confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

[a] Acts 5. 12; 14. 3; 1 Cor. 2. 4, 5; Heb. 2. 4.

Lord working with them. The design of miracles is here implied. It was the Divine witness to the truth of their words. Jesus still worked in them, and gave testimony to His Gospel, such as could not be gainsaid. ¶ *Amen. Truth.* Thus may it be—may He work still, and convince men of the blessedness of that Gospel. And we too say, *Amen.* Work with us, give us good words, Oh Lord, that we may speak wisely, and see Thy Gospel flourish and spread in all the world with power. Amen.

"Almighty God and most merciful Father, who of Thine infinite goodness hast given Thine only and dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ to be our Redeemer and the Author of everlasting life; who, after that He had made perfect our Redemption by His death, and was ascended into heaven, poured down His gifts abundantly upon men, making some Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, some Pastors and Doctors, to the edifying and making perfect His Church; grant, we beseech Thee, to Thy servants the Bishops and Pastors of Thy Church, such grace that they may evermore be ready to spread abroad Thy Gospel, the glad tidings of reconciliation with Thee; and use the authority given them, not to destruction, but to salvation; not to hurt, but to help: so that as wise and faithful servants, giving to Thy family their portion in due season, they may at last be received into everlasting joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with Thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, one God, world without end. Amen."

"O Almighty God, who hast built Thy Church upon the foundations of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner Stone; grant that, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, all Christians may be so joined together in unity of spirit and in the bond of peace, that they may be an holy temple acceptable unto Thee. Give them the abundance of Thy grace; that with one heart they may desire the prosperity of Thy holy Apostolic Church, and with one mouth may profess the faith once delivered to the saints. Defend them from the sins of heresy and schism: let not the foot of pride come nigh to hurt them, nor the hand of the ungodly to cast them down. And grant that the course of this world may be so peaceably ordered by Thy governance, that Thy Church may joyfully serve Thee in all godly quietness; that so they may walk in the ways of truth and peace, and at last be numbered with Thy saints in glory everlasting; through Thy merits, O blessed Jesus, Thou gracious Bishop and Shepherd of our souls, who art with the Father and the Holy Ghost one God, world without end. Amen."

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